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## PAUL LAROON:

—OR,—

## THE SCOURGE OF THE ANTILLES.

### A STORY OF SHIP AND SHORE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

### CHAPTER I.

PROLOGUE.

It was a cold, wet day in autumn, and the sun, which had not been seen since morning, was near its western home of rest. Upon the road from Malmsbury, to Bristol walked a man and two children. The former was young—not over six-and-twenty, and habited in the garb of a seaman. He was short in stature, and broad and heavy in his build, with a face of a bronzed hue, upon which was stamped much intelligence and wit. A careful observer would have seen the index to a quick, passionate disposition in that face, and from the dark, sombre smile that sometimes played upon it he would have also concluded that its possessor was not burdened with much of conscientious scruples where his purposes were at stake. Upon his shoulder he carried a small bundle, and in one corner of the handkerchief which served for a portmanteau was printed, in small, black letters, the name—MARL LAROON. Such, we are to suppose, was the name of the traveller.

The children were a boy and girl. The boy could not have been over five years of age, and he showed signs of excessive fatigue. He was a bright, intelligent looking little fellow, and possessed much physical beauty. The girl was younger still, certainly not yet four years old, and as she walked wearily along by the side of her conductor, the tears ever and anon started from her large, blue eyes. Her garb was plain and homely in the extreme, but her other appearance did not at all correspond with it. Her face was very pale and delicate, her hair long and glossy, and flowing in ringlets which betrayed much previous care and dressing, while her hands gave no token of acquaintance with dirt or filth. The boy had shed some tears, for the traces of them were still to be seen upon his plump cheeks, but he shed none now, for he had received a blow for crying.

Just as we introduce the little party, they had come to a stone which marked the line between Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, and here they stopped to rest.

"You're tired, aren't you?" said the man, addressing the boy, and at the same time placing his hand upon his head.

"Yes, sir," returned the lad, looking up, and shuddering as he met the gaze of his conductor.

"Well, never mind; we've only three miles farther to go before we reach the Cross-Hands Inn. You'll be glad to get there, wont you?"

"Yes, sir." The words were spoken timidly, and with evident reluctance.

"And when you do get there you'll remember that you are my child, wont you?"

"But you aren't my father?"

"Surely I am."

"O, no. Please don't make me say so."

"You'd rather be whipped, eh?"

"No, no!" shrieked the boy; and as he did so, the little girl sprang forward and threw her arms about his neck and burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

Marl Laroon removed the girl with a strong grip, and then looking the boy in the eye, he said:

"I am your father, and you must know it and say so. Where do you think your father is?"

"He's dead, sir!" sobbed the poor child.

"Who told you so?"

"Mr. Humphrey."

"He told you a lie, then. I left you with him two years ago, and you are my boy. I was going away, and he said he would take care of you till I came back. So when I came back I took you. Perhaps he thought I was dead, though. Very likely he did. Now just remember this, and if anybody asks you your name, tell 'em 'tis Paul Laroon. Mind, now. I don't think you want me to kill you, but I shall if you don't speak jist as I have told you. Think you can remember?"

"Yes, sir."

"And *will* you remember?"

"Yes, sir." The little fellow's lips trembled, and he would have burst into tears, but the look of his master prevented him.

"Mary," spoke Laroon, very kindly, "you are tired, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir," lisped the child.

"Say—*yes, uncle,*"

"'*Yes, unle,*" repeated she, as nearly as she could.

"Mary is your cousin, Paul, did you know it?"

"Yes, sir."

"All right. And now, my little Mary, you shall ride in my arms awhile; and perhaps I will carry Paul, by-and-by, if he gets very tired."

So saying, the stout sailor lifted the tiny form of the girl to his arms, and then the trio were once more on their way. It was fairly dark when they reached the little village at the point where the roads cross, and where stood the Cross-Hands Inn, at which place they stopped. Laroon did not take the children into the bar-room, but calling the landlord out he had a room provided with two beds in it, and thither he took his little charges. As it was too cold to sit up, and as it would cost too much for a fire, Laroon brought the children up their supper, and as soon as they had eaten it he helped them to bed, remarking, as he did so, that he was going down below awhile, and that they must be sure and make no noise.

When they were safely tucked up in their nest he gathered up the few dishes and left the chamber, being careful to lock the door after him and take away the key. For a long while the little ones lay there in silence, for even the girl had forgotten to sob and weep amid the strange thoughts that came crowding upon her mind at thus finding herself put to bed by a man, and in such a strange place.

"Mary," whispered the boy, when he had seemed to assure himself that the bad man would not hear him, "where are we going?"

"See mama," replied the simple child, remembering what her conductor had told her a hundred times during the day.

"O, Mary, your mama is dead!" uttered Paul.

"Yes, and me see her pretty soon," said the unconscious little one.

"But how can you see her if she is dead?" persisted the boy.

Mary gazed into her companion's face, upon which the dim rays of the candle fell, but she did not comprehend his meaning; and again she iterated her assertion that she was going to "see mama."

"That naughty man is not my papa," said Paul, after another spell of silence. "O, I know he is not. My papa is with your mama—in heaven; your good papa told me so."

"We go see papa and mama," uttered the gentle child, now smiling at the thought.

Paul gazed upon the sweet face of his mate, and gradually the conviction stole over him that she could not understand him if he spoke to her of the things that lay so heavily upon his thoughts; and it may be that there came even to his young mind the will not to pain his companion by further allusion to her misfortune.

But even to the boy's own mind things were not clear. He had a vague idea of matters passed, and of affairs present, but his comprehension was too weak for any philosophical deductions or extended reasonings. He only knew that he had been told that his father was dead, and that Mr. Humphrey had taken him to live in his own home. As he lay there and meditated, he saw a cloud round about him, and it seemed to him one of wrong and wickedness, but he could see no more. He clasped his hands and prayed, as he remembered he had been taught to do by some one whom he had loved, and when he had done this he turned towards his companion, but she was asleep. He reached over and kissed her, and as his lips touched hers, the word "mama," was lisped forth from her hopeful dreams.

"Poor Mary!" murmured Paul, as he lay back upon his pillow, "you will never see your mama again till you die, and perhaps we shall both be carried away off together where we shall never see our home any more!"

So the boy murmured, and then he laid still and gazed upon the dim outlines of the quaint carving which adorned the caps of the windows and doors, and while thus engaged he fell asleep.

It was quite late when Laroon came up, and having assured himself that the children slept, he proceeded to undress and get into the other bed, and ere long his heavy, discordant snoring mingled harshly and strangely with the gentle breathings of those who occupied the neighboring couch.

Away off in a distant part of the kingdom there was alarm and anguish. A man, frantic and delirious, was calling aloud for his child—for his children—and calling in vain. Lanterns and torches were flashing in every nook and corner where the children had been wont to play, but no children could be found. The streams were sounded and dragged, and the woods and hedges were scoured all through, but the lost ones came not. At midnight the man was upon his knees crying aloud to God for his children—but this frantic prayer was in vain!

### CHAPTER II.

THE SCOURGE OF THE ANTILLES.

AGAIN. And it was a bright, calm day in summer. Upon the bosom of the broad Atlantic, in about the latitude of Trinidad, but some three hundred miles to the eastward thereof, rested one of the most beautiful specimens of marine architecture that ever met the gaze of an enraptured seaman. It was a full-rigged brig with royals set, and studding-sails upon both sides. She may have been of two hundred tons burden, and perhaps more, for her graceful proportions gave no idea of her real capacity when viewed from a distance. She was heading up towards the Antilles, and taking the eastern trades nearly aft, so nearly so, at least, that her studding-sails drew upon both sides. Her sides were black, and only relieved by a stripe of blood-red just below her ports. Her masts were tall and tapering, the topgallant and royal masts being in separate spars, and they had but very little rake—just enough to give the shrouds and backstays a firm hold without too much weight of standing rigging.

But if her outward appearance was calculated to excite admiration, a view of her deck would most surely enhance it. Said deck was flush fore and aft, and as white as pure wood can be made. The disposition of the rigging showed that there was a rule for every department, even to the arrangement of the smallest item, while the arrangement itself proved that the whole was under the supervision of some shrewd mastermind. There were eleven guns, and all of brass, ten of which were upon the sides, and common eighteen-pounders, while the eleventh, of the same calibre, was much longer, and fixed upon a pivot and railway amidships. These guns were now covered with neatly fitting tarpaulins, and secured inboard, the ports being snugly closed.

There were seventy-seven men on board, and they all belonged to her, and though the reader may have already guessed the character of the craft, yet the crew were not of that appearance which we generally are led to look for in such a place. They were mostly English, and were as neat and orderly in their behaviour as the crew of any man-of-war.

Such was the "*Scourge of the Antilles,*" a name by which the brig and its commander were both known, not only by the crew, but by many others who had had occasion to prove the aptness of the name.

Near the wheel, with a glass under his arm, stood a man whose dress showed him to be the captain of the brig. He was short in stature, but very thick and broad, exhibiting much physical power of strength and endurance. His features were by no means repulsive, nor were they prepossessing, but they gave evidence of a keen, penetrating judgment, a quick, ready wit, and an untrammelled will. His face was very swarthy from exposure, his eyes black and sparkling, and his head covered by a growth of thick, black, crispy hair. He was not far from forty years of age, and his name was Marl Laroon. The reader has seen him before—long years ago—upon one of the highways of Old England.

Close by the captain stood another who is not wholly a stranger, though he retains nothing by which we might know him save his name. He is a youth, not over nineteen years of age, and possessing nothing in his outer appearance that could indicate his membership with such a crew. But he is a member, and has been for years. He is tall and straight, with features of more than ordinary beauty, and showing by every external look and action a noble, generous soul. His hair hangs in curling clusters about his head, and is of a dark brown, glossy hue, while his eyes, which sparkle like orbs of light, are of a rich, lustrous hazel. He is called Paul Laroon.

Not far off stand three more persons conversing together. The tallest of the three—he with the black hair and eyes, and the thin, satanic-looking lips, is John Langley, the first lieutenant. He is not over five and thirty. The next, who is of medium size, and, only peculiar on account of his light, flaxen hair, and large, yellowish blue eyes, which sometimes have a pure green shade, is Philip Storms, the second lieutenant. The third is a short, stumpy man, broad and heavy in his build, with elephantine motions. His head is large, and covered with coarse, gray hair, and his small gray eyes are quick and keen. He is the oldest man on board, being in the neighborhood of sixty years of age, and is the gunner of the brig His name is Ben Marton. The men look to their captain for orders, and when he is cool and assured they are the same, but when the pinch comes, and a few well-directed shots can help them out of a scrape, all eyes are turned to old Ben Marton, for well do they know that he alone can handle that long gun with a sure skill; and at such times even Laroon himself watches Ben's countenance as a sure index of safety or danger. When the old gunner's eyes twinkle, and the little smile creeps around his lips, then he is sure of his game.

"Paul," spoke the captain, turning to his youthful companion, "we shall reach our sylvan retreat ere long. Are you not glad?"

The youth started, and the rich blood mounted to his face as he met the captain's gaze.

"Were you thinking of the same thing?" continued Laroon, as he noticed Paul's emotion. There was a strange tinge of irony, or perhaps of bitterness, in these last words, and the dark-faced man gazed sharply into the other's eyes as he spoke.

"I was thinking of reaching the shore once more," answered the young man, in low, but steady tones.

"But weren't you thinking of any particular point of shore, eh?"

"Certainly I was," returned Paul, perfectly self possessed.

"And perhaps you were thinking of some particular person you would like to see, eh?" Laroon now gazed more fixedly than before into the youth's face, and in his own countenance he betrayed much eagerness.

Paul returned the look, but he seemed to dream of nothing that could have any unusual import in the case, and he was not much moved by it.

"I was thinking of a variety of things," he at length answered, "but I know of nothing particular that was uppermost."

"How would you like to see our little Mary?" asked the captain, speaking very lowly—almost in a whisper—and eyeing his companion sharply.

The youth started with a quick emotion, and for an instant his eyes dropped; but he collected himself as quickly as before, and then looking up again into his interlocutor's face, he replied:

"I should like to see her very much."

"Of course," responded Laroon. "It's natural you should." And again followed that same sharp, searching, incomprehensible look. "Of course you should," added the captain; and thus speaking he started towards the gangway where some of the men were weaving a mat.

Paul watched him as he walked away, and a troubled expression came upon his face.

"What does he mean?" he said to himself; and after some moments of thought he mentally added, "Only to tease me, that's all."

Shortly after this the boatswain piped to dinner. Paul quartered in the cabin, and was the surgeon of the brig. Some years before there had been an old man on board, who had served in that capacity, and as he grew aged and feeble he wished to leave the brig and spend the evening of his life on shore. Laroon granted his request upon condition that he would procure a good surgeon to take his place. Paul had already gained much experience from helping the old surgeon manage the sick and wounded, for while he was but a mere boy he had been of much use in preparing medicines and assisting in dressing wounds and fractures. So the old man agreed to take Paul in hand and learn him all the mysteries of the craft, and Laroon consented. The youth soon became expert in his new profession, and at the present time he had been two years in the charge of the sick, and the crew had ample reason to bless the day that gave them their new surgeon.

Dinner was eaten, and when the captain returned to the deck he found that the breeze had freshened. He was standing by the binnacle watching the compass, when the lookout at the fore-topgallant crosstrees reported a sail. In an instant all was life and bustle on board the brig, and the captain sprang for his glass and hastened forward.

"Fore-topgallant mast, there!"

"Ay, ay!"

"Where away?"

"Three points on the starboard bow."

"What does she look like?"

"Can't make her out."

"Keep your eye on her. Here, Storms, lay aloft with your glass and help the lookout."

The second lieutenant took his glass and went aloft, and then the captain returned to the wheel, where Paul was standing by the side of the helmsman.

"Well, Paul, what d'ye think has turned up now?" he said.

"Perhaps a merchantman," replied the youth, with a shudder.

"Mayhap it is, and mayhap it isn't. We're in the latitude of such craft; but there's another kind of chap cruising about these waters."

"An English cruiser, you mean?"

"Yes. How should you like to meet one?"

"It would not be the first one," replied the youth, without the least show of disomposure.

"That's true; but we might not reach the Silver Bay. How should you like that, eh?"

A quick shudder ran through Paul's frame, but there was more of indignation in his look than of fear, and at the end of a single moment he replied, with a half sarcastic smile:

"We'll think of Silver Bay after we have made ourselves sure we shall reach it."

"Well spoken, my son," cried the captain; and then he turned away.

"*Son!*" whispered the youth to himself, as he watched the movements of the dark man. "By my soul, I do not believe that man is my father! I never believed it! His blood never flowed in these veins. But whose blood does flow there?"

At this question Paul always stopped. He asked it of himself very often, but no answer ever came.

"Halle!" at this moment came from the second mate, who was aloft with his glass. "It's a square-rigged craft, and standing towards us."

"Is that all?" asked Laroon.

"Yes."

For fifteen minutes the captain paced the quarter-deck in silence, and at the end of that time, Mr. Storms reported that the strange sail was a ship, and to all appearance a man-of-war.

"Very well," returned Laroon, perfectly calm. "We'll find out her mettle before we show our stern. Ben—"

The old gunner moved quickly forward and touched his hat.

"You'd better get old Saladin in order, and bring up some of your pills."

"Ay, ay, sir," responded Ben, and as he spoke he shuffled away and called his assistants about him.

The long gun had been christened by the name of the renowned Saracenic sultan, and ere long it was divested of its tarpaulin, and the shot-box by its side was filled. The balls used in this gun were peculiar, being conic in shape, and encased in a closely fitting covering of leather. The gun itself was one which Ben had had constructed under his own supervision. The inside of the gun had been cast first in two parts, making two pieces such as would be gained by splitting a musket barrel in halves, from muzzle to breech. The concave surface of these had been grooved, and then four strips of steel firmly bedded in, so that their edges were raised nearly three sixtenths of an inch above the surface of the brass. Next the two pieces were soldered together with extreme exactness, and then the body of the gun was moulded upon it. Thus far the piece had remained firm, and it possessed all the advantages of the common rifle. The balls were so firmly held in their leather cases, which had been sewed on when wet and stretched, that they received a rotary motion which held them true to their course, and so well did they answer their purpose that the gunner seldom failed, even in his most dubious shots.

The long gun was loaded, and the ball driven snugly home, and then Ben Marton sat down upon the railway and waited further orders.

At the end of half an hour the second lieutenant came down and reported that the stranger was an English sloop of war.

"Stand by to take in the starboard stud'n'-sails!" ordered the captain. "We will choose our own course, and run as fast as we can, and if the fellow wants to overhaul us he may make the trial."

The starboard studding-sails were soon in, ere long the brig was heading due West, the very course she must make to reach her destination, though Laroon had meant to stop at Tobago if it came perfectly convenient.

It was now about half past one, and the ship's lower yards could be seen from the brig's deck, while the lookout at the crosstrees, who had the lieutenant's glass, could see her deck. He reported that she was a second class corvette, carrying twenty-four-pound carronades.

"Then she'll burn her fingers if she touches

us," exclaimed the old gunner. "Why, bless her poor devoted timbers, I could batter her all to pieces afore she could get a ball to hurt us out o' one o' them carronades."

As soon as the men learned the character of the craft that was probably giving them chase they smiled at each other with knowing nods and winks, for they felt sure that old Ben would cripple her before she could come near enough to do any harm.

When the brig had changed her course it was noticed that the ship immediately did the same, thereby clearly indicating that she meant to give chase. Had the pirate chosen to run to the southward she might easily have escaped, for she was evidently the best sailer, but she meant to do no such thing. This would put her back from her destination, and Marl Laroon had reasons for wishing to reach that point as soon as convenient. At any rate, he had a deadly hatred of all things appertaining to the British government, though a native of England himself, and he had resolved that he would never run from one of her cruisers if he could help it.

At length a curl of smoke was seen to rise from the ship's deck, and in an instant more came the report of a gun.

"That means for us to show our bunting," said Langley.

"Yes," responded the captain, "and up it goes. They shall see that we are not ashamed nor afraid to show our colors."

In a few moments more a small, compact ball arose to the mainpeak, and as soon as it was at its place the knot was drawn, and the flag fluttered out to the breeze. It was simply a field of black with a pair of crossed swords in white relief. As soon as this piece of impertinence was perpetrated, the ship fired another gun, and this time she seemed to have fired a shot, for something fell into the water about midway between the two vessels. But the brig kept on without paying any attention to this polite request.

The vessels were now not far from a mile apart. The brig, as we have before remarked, was heading due west. The sloop-of-war was now nearly abeam, and heading about southwest, so that she would come within carronading range if she kept on in that way, even allowing that the brig sailed the fastest.

A little while passed, and the pirate crew were becoming uneasy. The ship was ever and anon popping away at her bow guns, but none of her shot reached their mark. Laroon stood by the old gunner's side, and ere long he asked him how n shot would work.

"I'll try," was Ben's simple answer; and as he spoke he arose and set about levelling his gun.

"I'll give 'em a runnin' shot this time," he continued, after he had calculated the distance and elevated the piece. He then took the match, and watched for his opportunity, for he had pointed the gun a little astern to allow for the head range. With a keen, steady gaze he marked the movement of the brig, and when the line of his sight along the gun struck a point about six inches abaft the ship's foremast he applied the match. There was a quick report, a shock, and a trembling of the brig's spars, and then all hands sprang to the rail to see what was the result. The old gunner waited anxiously for the report, and his eye brightened as he saw the ship's men rushing up the fore-shrouds.

"You've hit the foremast just below the futtocks," cried Storms, who had been gazing through a glass.

"Then we'll try once more in the same place," returned Ben; and thus speaking he proceeded to reload his gun.

Before he got it loaded, however, a shout of joy arose from the pirate's deck, for the sloop-of-war was getting off the foremast as fast as possible. Her fore-royal and top-gallant-sail were clewed up, and the topsail yard let go by the run; and it could now be seen that the mast was swaying considerably. But Ben Martin took no note of this. He loaded his gun with the utmost care—putting in an exact quantity of powder, and selecting a shot that would drive home snugly. When all was ready he took his aim with a calm precision, and when he applied the match the expression upon his face told that he meant mischief to some one. And surely he did, for hardly had the smoke cleared away ere the sloop-of-war's foremast was seen to go over the side, taking with it the main-top-gallant mast and jib-boom.

"That'll do," said Laroon, as calmly as though he had been making some new disposition of the sails.

But the men were not so cool. They shouted with all their might, and when they felt that they had expressed their full feelings they relapsed into their usual quiet and orderly state. Ben Marton carefully cleaned his gun, outside and in, and then replaced the tarpaulin, while Storms shut up his glass and placed it in its beckets upon the binnacle.

"We'll go to Tobago," said the captain.

Accordingly the course was changed two points further north and the yards trimmed. Two hours later the sloop of-war could be discerned still hampered by part of the wreck of spars that had so summarily fallen upon her.

## CHAPTER III.

### BUFFO BURNINGTON.

JUST at evening on the second day after the encounter with the sloop of war, the Scourge of the Antilles dropped her anchor in a little cove upon the southern coast of the island of Tobago. There was a small village of one story huts upon the shore, and close by the water, upon a sort of bluff, stood quite a respectable house. The people here knew the character of the brig well, for here it was that she took in many of her stores when she wanted them, and here also she had a hospital, where many of the inhabitants found employment as nurses, for those who were laid up here with wounds and disease generally possessed golden pockets, and could afford to pay for good nursing.

As soon as the sails were all furled, and the deck cleared up, Laroon had his boat manned, and went on shore. It was already dark when he reached the little pier which was built out from the beach, and he took his way at once towards the house on the bluff, which was the hospital in question. When he reached the verandah he found the old surgeon—the same who had formerly sailed with him—ready to receive him. The two proceeded to one of the best drawing-rooms, where a heavy hanging lamp was already burning, and there they seated themselves. Laroon first asked after the welfare of the sick ones, and he was informed, in general terms, that they were getting along well.

"But how many can you let me have to take away with me?" asked the pirate chieftain.

"Not over five at the outside," returned the surgeon.

"But I must have more."

"Then you've been thinning off again, eh?"

"No. I've lost only five men. I have seventy-five men on board now, besides Paul and myself."

"Then why so urgent?"

"I'll tell you. I mean to take a shore cruise if I can muster the men. There's more gold on shore than there is at sea. Down around the shores of Lake Valencia there live a lot of natives who own gold by the ton, and I want to feel of 'em. Do you understand?"

"Yes," returned the surgeon, with a sparkling eye, for the thought of such plunder had yet a charm for him. "But can't you make your present force do?"

"I suppose I shall have to.——And you have had no applications from any one?"

"Ah, yes, I liked to have forgotten. Yes, I have had one application, and I guess the fellow is here now. I told him the brig would be in shortly, I thought, and if he would wait he might get a chance."

"Does he know what flag we sail under?"

"Yes."

"How did he find out?"

"From some one who had been with us. He met him in prison, I think he said."

"A funny place for one of our men to be found in," said Laroon, with a laugh. "But what sort of a fellow is he?"

"Upon my word I can't deseribe him. You must wait until you see him. I'll send for him at once."

As the surgeon thus spoke, he rang a bell which stood upon the table near him, and in a moment more a boy made his appearance.

"Jack," spoke the old sawbones, "you remember that one eyed fellow who has been here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, you'll find him at old Madaline's. Go down there and tell him to come up here."

The boy promised to be quick, and then withdrew.

After this Laroon explained to the surgeon the results of the cruise from which he was now returning, and from that account one might have learned that the work had been both a golden and bloody one. In the course of half an hour the boy returned, and with him came the individual in question, who came limping into the room with a gait that promised anything but quickness of movement. The pirate chieftain could not repress a smile as he gazed upon the new-comer, though some more timid might have been frightened more than amused.

The man who has thus been introduced upon the scene was, in every respect, peculiar. He was an old man—that is, past the meridian of life—perhaps five-and-fifty—and very slightly bent in form, but not enough to give his back any hump. In frame he was of medium height when he stood at rest, but somewhat taller when standing upon his right leg alone, that being some two inches longer than the other leg; and this of course gave him a very awkward movement. But his face was more peculiar still. He had lost one eye—the left one—and the skin about the orbless socket was much disfigured, giving him one of the most sinister looks imaginable. His hair was short and crispy, and of a dirty red color, while the face was almost as dark as a Malay's. But he had one redeeming quality. He was stout and powerful in his physical mould, revealing a breast and shoulders and arms of almost Herculean proportions. Next to the repulsive-looking place where an eye had been lost, which was sunken and shrivelled up, the most peculiar and striking feature of the face was the eye that was left. One would expect to find a light-colored eye with such a head, but it was not so. That single eye was not only of the darkest hazel, but it burned and sparkled with the most strange power and brilliancy. But what was it that yet remained of feature which gave him such strangeness of look? Surely there was something more—something different from ordinary faces—something lacking, or something superadded. But what was it? Marl Laroon had noted the orbless socket, the brilliant eye, the swarthy skin, and the crispy red hair, with its closely curling locks. There were no whiskers to look odd, for the whole face was shaven smooth, or else no beard grew there, but this latter alternative was without foundation, for those who had lived with him had heard his razor rattle upon his beard as though it had been cutting off bushes. Laroon seemed determined to hunt up that odd feature, and after awhile he found it. The man had no eyebrows!

But Marl Laroon was not the only one who gazed fixedly into another's face, for the stranger gazed full as sharply into his, and seemed full as much interested in the work.

"Well, sir," commenced the pirate captain, seeming to speak with an effort, "so you want to ship on board my vessel?"

"Yes, sir," answered the other, in a gruff, coarse tone.

"An' do you know the business you will be required to do?"

"Obey orders I suppose."

"Exactly. Upon my word, I like that answer. But what do you suppose those orders will amount to?"

"Gold! gold! Perhaps *blood!* But gold ahead of all else!"

Marl Laroon started as these words fell upon his ear, for they were not only strange in themselves, but they were most strangely spoken. And then the man looked at him so with that one dark eye when he spoke—the bold buccaneer had never shrank so before beneath a human gaze.

"You speak rather more harshly than there is any need of," he said, in a tone which would seem to indicate that he did not wholly like the speech he had heard.

"O, I can speak as kindly as you wish," quickly returned the strange man, with a smile—and there was something kind in the smile, too. "And," he added, "I can be as gentle as a lamb."

"Are you acquainted with the sea?"

"Yes, sir."

"And reef, and steer?"

"Yes, sir; and navigate and work anything out o' the book."

"Handle a cutlass?"

"Try me."

"Never mind that now. What is your name?"

"Buffo Barnington."

"A curious name," said Laroon, eyeing him sharply.

"Ay," he calmly replied, "and some people think I am a curious man."

"Do they?"

"I think so."

Laroon regarded the new man for some moments in silence, but his gaze was not steady, for there was something in that lone eye—ay, and in that whole face, that troubled him.

"Perhaps you have seen me before," remarked the captain, with seeming carelessness, but yet with a look and tone which proved him to be anxious on the very subject thus broached.

"I think I have, sir."

"Ha! Where?"

"In England."

"What part?"

"I think at London."

"Do you remember the circumstances?"

"Yes," returned Burnington, looking Laroon steadily in the face. "It was at a time when your meals were served in your own room."

"Eh?"

"By the jail—"

"Stop!" shouted the pirate, starting to his feet. "That is enough. If you will join my crew and sign my articles, you shall go with us, and fare and share with the rest. We are pirates!"

"I knew it."

"How?"

"I saw a man at Kingston, in Jamaica, who had been with you, and he directed me here."

"Do you remember his name?"

"He would not tell it."

"All right. Are you ready to go on board?"

"I can be ready in half an hour."

"Then hurry off, and you will find me here at the end of that time."

As Buffo Burnington left the room Laroon touched the bell. The same boy answered it as before.

"Jack," said the captain, "go and watch that man. Follow him carefully, and don't lose sight of him. If he attempts to leave the village hurry back with all speed."

The boy merely bowed, and then set out on his mission. After he was gone Laroon rested his elbow upon the table, and buried his brow in his hands. Thus he remained for some minutes totally regardless of the presence of another.

"Do you want those five men to go on board to-night?" asked the surgeon, at length.

But the captain did not answer. At the end of some two minutes more, the old man asked the question again:

"Do you want those five men to go on board to-night?"

Laroon seemed to have heard some one speak, for he raised his head, and then started up from his chair; but without answering he commenced to pace the room.

"McLura," he said at length, stopping in front of the surgeon, "how long has that man been here?"

"About a week."

"And did he give you that same name when he first came?"

"Yes."

"It must be some strange whim that has seized me, then."

"Why, captain—do you think you have seen him before?"

"I don't know. But he's a strange looking man, isn't he?"

"He is, surely; and one, I should think, not easily to be forgotten when once seen."

"True. I never saw him before—of course I never did—but he puts me in mind of some one whom I have seen. That's all, I'm sure."

Again the pirate chieftain commenced to pace up and down the room, and this he continued to do until the boy returned and informed him that the man he was sent to watch was coming.

"Ah, you said something about the five men, doctor—"

"Yes, sir. I asked you if you would take them off to-night?"

"No. I'll come for them in the morning."

Just as he spoke the door opened, and Buffo Burnington entered, and reported himself ready to go on board. Again Laroon gazed into that quaint, ugly-looking face, but he gained nothing by his search, and shortly afterwards he bade the new-comer be seated, and then signified his desire to see the men who were well enough to rejoin the brig. McLura arose and led the way out from the room, and when they were both gone, and the door was closed behind them, Burnington started to his feet and stamped across the room. His hands were clasped, and his eye emitted sparks of fire. He did not walk much, for his lameness caused his steps to make an unusual noise, and he remained for some time standing still in the centre of the apartment.

"By the powers above me!" he muttered to himself, while his hands worked nervously together, as though he were renting some firm fabric in twain, "you think you have seen me before! Ha, ha, Marl Laroon, I have the advantage of thee. Misfortune has laid her relentless hand upon my body, and she has left me so much the worse for her visit that even you cannot peer beneath the veil she has drawn over me. By the mass, but we'll have a right merry cruise together!"

After this the man sat down, and though his eye still sparkled, yet there was an earnest, eager look upon his dark features. He sat with his broad hands folded in his lap, and his gaze bent upon the floor, and thus he remained until Laroon returned.

"Now, my hero, we'll move our stumps towards the shore," said the captain. "Where's your luggage?"

"At the door," returned Burnington, rising to his feet.

Laroon led the way out, and upon the piazza he found quite a respectable-sized bag. This the new man threw lightly over his shoulder, and then the two started down towards the pier, Laroon keeping his companion a few paces in advance. Whether he did this through fear, or only from the whim of habit, it were hard to tell. The boat was found in readiness, and ere long the lame sailor was upon the deck of the craft he had promised to make his home. A hammock was served out to him by the sail-maker, and the second lieutenant gave him a number upon the berth deck. But few of the men were up to see him, and he escaped without being bothered.

Buffo Burnington was thus quartered for such a cruise as his commander might see fit to project, and he certainly looked like one who would hesitate at nothing between the grog-tub and the cannon's mouth.

And Marl Laroon had got a new man, and when he retired to his cabin he sat down and tried to call up something that dwelt in the past. The last words he uttered, before falling asleep, were:

"Surely I have seen him before! O, why—*why* can I not remember!"

## CHAPTER IV.

### AN ACCIDENT.

ON the following morning there was much excitement and curiosity on board the brig. The new man had come upon deck, and no one of the crew had ever seen him before.

"Blow me tight, but he's a queer 'un, aren't he?" remarked one of the men to another—the two having, with the rest of the crew, been watching Buffo Burnington for some time.

"Aren't he, though," responded the second man, emphatically.

"Ay, that he is," added the first; "an' you may lay yer life 'at he's an ugly customer to handle. Look at his arms, and his neck, and his shoulders. An' jus' look at that eye, too. Shiver my timbers if he aren't a hard 'un."

"But d'ye mind how cool he takes it? Hang me, if I shouldn't think he'd been here all his life-time."

"But d'ye mind one other thing, eh?" uttered Jack, lowering his voice to a whisper, and speaking with a mysterious nod and wink. "D'ye mind how the captain eyes him. Just look. Just watch old Marl now, as he claps his peepers on him. Did ye mind?"

"Ay, ay, didn't I though. Hain't I minded it from the first?"

And so the men conversed about the deck, and in the meantime the object of this curiosity was slowly stumping up and down the larboard gangway. At length the boatswain piped to grog, and when the men were gathered about the grog-tub the captain came forward and made a sign to the steward to stop a moment before he commenced to fill the torts.

"My men," spoke Laroon, "you have a new shipmate. Let me introduce him to your friendship and acquaintance. *Buffo Burnington*—and I hope the acquaintance may prove a benefit to us all."

As the captain moved aft after having thus spoken, the men gathered around their new shipmate and extended their hands. The whole cast of his countenance was changed in an instant. A warm smile lighted up his dark features, and for the while one might almost have forgotten the wild distortion of his features. After this the men drank their grog, and then sat down to their breakfast, which was served upon messcloths spread between the guns on the sparr-deck.

About an hour later Burnington stood by the binnacle as Paul Laroon came up from the cabin. The youth started with surprise as he saw the strange-looking figure, and then cast an inquisitive glance upon the captain. Marl understood the silent question, and moving forward, he said:

"This is a new man, Paul—Buffo Burnington."

The man turned quickly towards the youth, and his eye snapped till tiny sparks seemed really to start from it.

"This is our surgeon, Burnington," resumed the captain.

"And your son, I should take it, if I might judge from his looks," returned Buffo, looking first upon one, and then upon the other, but particularly noting the countenance of the youth.

"Yes, yes," responded Laroon, with a pleasure which he did not attempt to hide, for this was the first time that ever such a remark had been made. "Then you think he looks like me?" he added, half carelessly.

"There is certainly a resemblance," replied Burnington; "enough, at least, to indicate that you are both of one family."

"So we are—so we are," uttered Marl, gazing into Paul's features with a dark smile; and as he did so Buffo was regarding him with another smile—and such a smile that more than one man noticed it, and wondered what it meant.

Paul turned away and went to the taffrail, and from the expression of his countenance one could have easily seen that he was far from pleased with the remarks which had been made.

"Why, bless my soul, *do* ye think 'at Paul looks like the old 'un?" asked Ben Marton as Buffo walked forward and stood by the long gun. The old gunner gazed into the new man's face as he spoke, as though he were a little incredulous. He had heard the conversation at the wheel, and he seemed desirous to know where the resemblance lay.

"Yes," returned Buffo; "I think there is a family resemblance. They don't either of 'em look like a horse, nor a dog, nor a dolphin; but they look like men. Don't ye think that the capt'n belongs to the human family?"

"Eh! What?"

"Don't ye think Marl Laroon belongs to the human family?"

"Sartin I do," returned Ben, who had just got hold of the idea.

"And how about the young one? Don't he belong to the same?"

"Sartin," responded Ben, inquisitively.

"Then they belong to the same family, don't they?"

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed the gunner, beginning to see into the paradox. "Then ye don't think they look alike, arter all?"

"As one man looks like another, that's all."

"What did ye say so for, eh?"

"I thought 'twould please the captain to think that he possessed even one solitary feature that looked like the face of such a noble-looking youth."

"By the great gun, you've hit it now, shipmate," exclaimed Ben, with uncommon emphasis. "The youngster *is* a noble-looking fellow; but that aren't half. He's better, if anything, than he looks. Perhaps you wont believe it, but it's true. He's just one of the noblest, kindest, faithfullest, best-hearted youngsters you ever see. Between you and me—I don't think you'll blab—"

"When I betray the confidence of an honest-hearted shipmate, I'll open my bosom to your knife."

This answer pleased Ben much, and from that moment he began to have a generous friendship for the strange man.

"I was goin' to say," he resumed, looking carefully about him to see that no one else could overhear, "'at it seemed strange to me why the capt'n should want to make such a noble boy follow this life. I'm an old hulk now, an' aint much good to anybody only with this old gun here, an' I s'pose I'll die alongside of some honester man than I am, but I tell ye it has made my heart ache to see poor Paul forced to see our wickedness, and sometimes made to help in it, when at the same time I could see 'at he hated it."

"Then the captain has forced his son to sail with him?"

"Yes. I've heard Paul beg and beg to be left alone, but 'twas no go. Marl would make him come."

"But hasn't the youth had a chance to run away?" asked Buffo, with considerable earnestness.

"Yes, a good many, if he had wanted to."

"Then why has he not done it?"

"Ah, there's a very good reason," answered Ben, with a sad shake of the head, and speaking in a lower tone. He cast his eyes about him as he spoke, and then settled into a moody, thoughtful silence.

"What is that reason?" asked Burnington, in a whisper.

It was some moments before the old gunner answered, but at length he said:

"There's one he wont leave behind him, and that he can't easily take with him."

"On board, is he?"

"Who, on board?"

"This person that Paul would take with him."

"O, 'tisn't a *he*."

"Ah—a female, then?"

"Yes. A young girl who stays at Silver Bay. O, you should see her. Such beauty! My eyes, but you never saw the like. She wa'n't more 'n so high when I first see her—" and Ben placed his open palm about two and a half feet from the deck—"and even then she was the beautifullest thing I ever clapped my eyes on. But she's grow'd up now, an' she's made just a regular angel."

"And so Paul wont go away and leave this girl?"

"No, for she's never real happy only when he's with her."

"What is her name?"

"Mary Delany."

After this Buffo Burnington walked forward, and for over half an hour he leaned over the bows and looked down into the water; and even then he was only called from his reverie by the order to man the windlass, and stand by to get under weigh. He moved very slowly at first, but soon he entered into the spirit of the bustle, and hove away at the handspike with a will.

It was just about noon when the anchor was secured at the cathead and fished, and as soon as all sail was made, and the yards properly trimmed, the boatswain piped to grog, and then the off watch went to dinner. The distance from Tobago to Silver Bay was not far from five hundred and fifty miles, and the course lay but a very little south of west. The wind here was variable, for the bold, broad shores of Trinidad broke the trades. At the present time the wind came out from the northward and eastward, and blew quite a respectable breeze, so the brig took it full upon the quarter, and carried her starboard studdingsails below and aloft.

"That fellow handles himself well," remarked Langley, the first officer, as he stood by the side of the captain upon the weather quarter. He nodded towards Burnington as he spoke, which individual was then sitting alone upon the railway of the long gun.

"I think he'll make a good hand for us," returned Laroon, looking upon the maimed seaman.

"He's got strength enough, if that's all," resumed the lieutenant. "He'd almost walk the anchor up single-handed, and if he fights accordingly, he'll be valuable."

The captain made no reply to this, but had fallen into a sort of moody silence, with his eyes fixed with a sort of sidelong glance upon Burnington. After a while Langley spoke again:

"What was the news on shore? Any cruisers been in sight?"

"Yes, one," replied Laroon, starting as though he had been aroused from an interesting and absorbing thought. "A French corvette has been hovering around the island, but she left three days ago."

"Sure 'twas a Frenchman?"

"So McLura said, and I think it very likely, for there are several of them stationed at Martinique."

"Which way did she go?"

"Off somewhere to the northward."

"Then we shan't see her."

"Probably not," returned Laroon, at that moment attracted by some sort of disturbance forward. He went immediately to the forecastle with a heavy frown upon his brow, but when he arrived there, he found that the disturbance had been occasioned by the gunner's falling from the breech of one of the bow-guns, where he had been standing to look upon the shore.

At first the accident seemed likely to pass off with only a laugh, for old Ben arose immediately to his feet and smiled. But his smile was a very blank and ghastly one, and he staggered some as he attempted to move away. He had hit his head upon the deck in falling, and the blow was far from being a light one. The old man had not taken more than half a dozen steps when he stopped and threw his arms wildly about him, and in a moment more he sank heavily upon the deck. The men gathered quickly about him, and Buffo Barrington took him into his arms, as he would have taken a child, and carried him aft.

"He's hurt pretty bad, I'm sure," Buffo said, as he stopped before Paul.

"I hope not," uttered the youthful surgeon, seeming to speak with himself, "for I shall have lost my best friend if—"

He did not finish the sentence, for at that moment the captain came up, and at his order the senseless form was placed upon the trunk of the companion-way. Paul at once set about examining the old man's head. He found where the blow had been received, but there was no fracture of the skull that he could detect.

"How is it?" asked the captain, as Paul arose from the examination.

"Bad—bad," replied Paul.

"Skull broken?"

"No, but the brain has received a severe shock, and the utmost care will have to be taken to prevent a fatal result."

This intelligence created much sensation among the crew, for Ben was the last man whom most of them would wish to have spared. The captain himself was nervous and uneasy, for well did he know that one half the virtue of the long gun would be gone with its master.

Ere long the old man came to, and as soon as he was fully conscious he began to groan and writhe with pain.

"My head! my head!" he fairly shrieked. "It will split! For the love of heaven do something!"

Paul's first movement was to bathe the head in cold water. Then he administered a dose of physic—of salts—and next he applied leeches to the head. As soon as the blood began to flow his head felt easier, and Paul then had another bath prepared for the feet, after which he applied draughts. After the leeches had taken all the blood Paul thought necessary, he had the invalid removed to his cot, and then placed a watcher by him to keep the bandages about the head wet with cold sea-water.

The youth had now done all he could, and he could only see that his patient was kept perfectly quiet, and watch for any new development that might manifest itself. At dark Ben was still groaning with pain, and the surgeon applied more leeches, and at the end of half an hour he was easier again. At nine o'clock Paul gave a strong dose of opium, but the poor fellow got no rest during the night, for the pain in his head was so severe that no narcotic could overcome it while life remained.

Mad Laroon watched the invalid with much anxiety, for now that his gunner was disabled he was led into a train of thought upon what would be the probable result of meeting a fleet cruiser from whom he could not escape by fair sailing.

Little did he dream how near at hand the test was!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

### SCHAMYL AND HIS SON.

Within the last few weeks Schamyl has been rejoined by the return of his son, who, eleven years ago, when of tender age, had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by the Russians. Since then Schamyl had not heard of the boy, and long ago gave him up for lost. It appears, however, that when he was captured, the Russian General, Prince Woronzoff, sent him to St. Petersburg, where the late emperor took a liking to the lad, and had him educated in the Military Academy. It happened last year that Schamyl, in some sudden surprise, took several Russian ladies prisoners, amongst whom was the Princess Tscharawaddy. They were conducted to one of Schamyl's mountain fastnesses, and confined there as prisoners of war, but treated with the respect and decorum due to their rank and sex. The governor-general of Tiflis sent a flag of truce to Schamyl to demand the release of the captured ladies, offering a large sum of money and the liberty of several Circassian ladies who had been made prisoners by the Russians. But Schamyl replied that if his sons were alive, and the Russians would restore him, he would release all the lady captives. The Emperor Nicholas sent for young Schamyl, gave him his liberty, and fitted him out with the needful equipments to undertake the long journey. The exchange took place in the end of January. Young Schamyl, who, when at St. Petersburg, was not required to abjure the Moslem creed, has profited by his involuntary *sejour* at the Russian capital, and has now returned to his overjoyed father an accomplished cavalier, with a complete military education.—*London News.*

### CHARACTER.

Some writer has said: "We may easily judge of a man's character by what he loves—what pleases him. If a person manifests pleasure in low and sordid objects, in vulgar songs and debasing language, in the misfortune of his fellows, or cruelty to animals, we may at once determine the complexion of his character. On the contrary, if he loves purity, modesty, truth—if virtuous pursuits engage his heart and draw out his affections, we may be satisfied that he is an upright man. A debased mind shrinks from associations with the good and wise."

Lord Erskine was a printer! Franklin was a printer! Berenger, the French poet, was a printer! Thiers, the French historian, was a printer!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

### MY WESTERN HOME.

BY R. G. DENIO.

O give me a home in the far distant West,
When earth in her beauty and verdure is dressed;
When woodlands re-echo songs merry and free—
And wild flowers are blooming o'er prairie and lea.

I love thy broad prairies, thy clear winding streams,
When soft o'er the landscape the moon pours her beams;
Or when the lingering ray of the sunlight falls
Through thy shady groves, and thy leafy halls.

O, a lovelier sight the eye hath ne'er seen—
Than the rich, velvet mantle of waxy green;
While earth in her beauty has brightly unrolled,
And gemmed it with flowers of azure and gold.

O give me a home in this land that I love,
Where the blue skies are bending so brightly above;
Where the sweetest of birds in the world that be,
Are flitting and singing from spray to tree.

O yes, 'tis a fairy spot, this prairie home,
With its carpet of green, and its glittering dome;
Where the timid deer bounds, gladsome and free;
O, a prairie home is the home for me.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE FOILED USURER.

BY GEORGE P. BURNHAM.

No two positions or characters in life could scarcely be more opposite to each other, than were those of young Mark Manning and old Robin Weston. The youth was twenty-one—full of enterprise, good nature, and love for the beautiful, but poor as a church-mouse in purse; while the old man was seventy, crabbed and cynical, a bachelor and a miser, and rich as a London Jew.

Robin Weston had no aim but to hoard up his gold and silver—for what purpose nobody knew,—and having begun life an anchorite and a sharper, he so continued, until he had heaped up an immense fortune, which one day or other he was satisfied he must leave behind him—for he would never, willingly, part with a dollar while living, unless he first made sure that two would be returned to him in its stead.

Old Robin had no heir, and he was never known to allude to one of his relatives, if he had any. He came into the town of B—— a penniless boy (he said), and worked his way along until he became possessed of a little capital to "operate" with, when he set up on his own account—shaved small notes, obtained cent per cent for trivial accommodations, backed by good security, gave away nothing, saved everything, and came to be rich, and, consequently, powerful, in his way.

He lived in a miserable tenement, alone, cooked his own victuals (if he had any!) and was usually in the enjoyment of good health, save when occasionally he would overrench himself, by usury, in some careless manner, and find himself compelled to yield his extra interest; which operation proved equal to a dose of lobelia to this wretched man, whose sensitiveness lay entirely in his breeches pockets.

"Good morning, uncle Robin," said Mark Manning to the ancient money-worshipper, one day, as he thrust himself hurriedly into his presence. "Hope you're well and hearty."

"What now, boy?" responded old Weston, buttoning his coat closely. "What do you want, eh?"

"Four hundred dollars, uncle."

"Four hundred dollars, uncle! It's all very fine, my boy. You can't 'uncle' me into that, do you see. 'Cause why—you know I never see four hundred *cents* at a time."

"That's the old story—just what I expected you'd say. But I must have this sum, and right away."

"Get it, then! You can't have no money here—'cause why, I haint got none."

"Well, look you, uncle. You know the old homestead here?"

"Yes—yes."

"You know what my equity in the estate is worth?"

"No—no. I haint no money—none whatever."

"Don't you know, uncle, that my rights in that property are cheap at two thousand dollars?"

"Well, wot o' that? Your aunt aint dead yet."

"Yes she is; see, here's the letter; read for yourself."

And old Robin took the open letter in his hand, which Mark had received that morning, informing him of the sudden demise of his aunt, who retained only a life-estate in the property mentioned. She died a hundred miles from home, among her late husband's relatives; and Robin knew that this was the only bar to young Mark Manning's coming into the immediate possession of the homestead.

"So Katy's gone, eh?"

"You see for yourself."

"Yes. Well, what did you say you wanted? Two hundred dollars?"

"*Four* hundred, uncle."

"Well, I haint got no two hundred dollars; but I might find somebody—a friend of mine—who'd advance as much as that on that property, if it's free and clear, eh?"

"I never knew of any lien or mortgage on it, uncle."

"Well, then, it'll cost high, you know, to borrow money now-a-days. It's very pinchin' times—I never knew it so bad—*never*. What you go'n to do with two hundred dollars?"

"I said four hundred, uncle."

"*Four!* What on earth can you do with that sum? It's a fortin' to anybody, four hundred dollars is!" exclaimed the miser.

"That is no affair of yours. I shall use it with discretion. Will you obtain it for me?"

"And the security, Mark, eh?"

"A bond and mortgage on the homestead."

"Free and clear, you say? I must be particular, you see, else my friend wont venture the money."

"Yes, it is unencumbered, and would sell for two to three thousand dollars, quick. I can't sell it, however; I will borrow the money for one year. I can then pay it, and a fair interest for its use."

"What do you call fair interest, then, Mark?" continued the miser. "You see I must know what to do, as my friend—who sometimes has money to rent—will want to know what I can agree to give him, you know. Eh?"

"Well, do the best you can, uncle. When will you give me the answer?"

"Within a week."

"A week! I must have the four hundred dollars to-morrow morning, or I don't want it at all."

"Ah, Mark, you're allers in such haste, you see. I can't do it in less than five days anyhow."

"Good-by, then," said Mark.

"Well, I'll see—look you, Mark!" added the old man; "we must have three days to examine title, and all that, you know."

"Will you see *your friend* to day, and have the money and the mortgage ready to-morrow morning?" said Mark, all ready to leave.

"To-morrow, at five, P. M.," said Robin.

"To-morrow, at seven, A. M.," responded Mark, firmly. "I shall leave town at eight o'clock without fail."

"At seven be it, then," added Robin. And these two village antipodes separated for four-and-twenty hours.

Robin Weston immediately made up his mind to two things, to wit: First, that the boy was a fool, and secondly, that the nice little estate he had thus suddenly tumbled into, would surely become his (Robin's) property at the expiration of the next twelvemonth. He would advance the four hundred dollars, arrange the mortgage to suit himself, the boy would surely fail to pay—how *could* he ever repay him four hundred dollars!—and the homestead (worth over two thousand five hundred dollars) would be *his!* "Ha! ha!" thought old Robin, "he's a nice young gentleman, but he didn't know what gold is worth. He's a fast youth is Mark Manning, and will live to learn somethin' by-and-by."

At the appointed hour, Mark Manning re-appeared, next morning. Robin had the money all ready, in clear, bright gold, when the boy reached his humble domicil again.

"Good morning, uncle,"—Mark always called the old man "uncle," as did the rest of the village boys. "Did you get it?"

"Yes; but money's dreadful tight, you see. Now you needn't take it unless you've a mind to do so. My friend sent it over, but he wants good, strong interest, you see. Here's the mortgage all ready—runs to *me*, but that's only nominal. I give him my note, and you secure *me*. Do you see, eh? You must sign this, and this—and here's the money. The interest, legally, is six per cent. That's twenty-four dollars; and he wants a bonus of seventy five, and there's one dollar for papers. Five hundred dollars in all, you see."

"What! For *four* hundred?" exclaimed Mark. "Do you want me to pay five hundred for four, in one year?"

"Cheap as old brooms, Mark—as money now is. You needn't have it, Mark. He says he can do better, you see."

Mark Manning read over the bond, signed it, gave his promise to pay one year from date, five hundred dollars, and departed as he came; only with four hundred dollars more in his pocket than he had ever had there before at any one time.

Robert Weston saw no more of the boy for three weeks, and then he suddenly turned up again in company with a fair young girl, whom he had made his wife in the interim. They came to B——, took possession of the comfortable old homestead, and settled down in hopes of future happiness and moderate ease. Robin said nothing, aloud, but he kept up an earnest *thinking*. The mortgage was stringently drawn, without the usual "right of redemption" on the part of the mortgager (in case of his inability to pay the bond at maturity, promptly), and if he failed to meet his promise, old Weston saw the homestead his own. If he *did* pay, then he would get twenty-five per centum for the use of his money, which was "some comfort" in the midst of his reflections.

Mark expended fifty dollars in getting married, and in the purchase of some trifles to add to the furniture of the homestead. With the balance, he joined fortunes with a friend, and worked early and late to earn the balance due to Robin, that he might be punctual upon the coming pay-day. At the end of six months he had over four hundred dollars. In three months longer he counted up sixty dollars more. And, at the expiration of the eleventh month, he was nearly ready to pay the rigid old skinflint his five hundred dollars. The money was carefully stowed away in his house, in good bank notes, and he had a full month yet before the mortgage expired, to raise the remaining fifteen dollars, to meet his note, of which he already had notice.

"Is your house insured?" asked his young partner, one day, as they were speaking of a recent calamitous fire that had occurred in a neighboring town.

"No, Charles—not yet. I shall pay uncle Rob. his money first; and immediately as that is out of the way I shall attend to that little matter."

"When is his note due?"

"In twenty days."

"You had better get insured, Mark."

"For why?"

"Accidents sometimes occur, you know."

"Nonsense, Charles! The old place has stood it for five and-forty years, and never a cent insurance was on it, yet; and houses don't burn down in twenty days, anyhow."

Charles smiled at his friend's facetiousness; and Mark Manning forgot all about the matter a moment afterwards.

On the third night succeeding this conversation, the homestead of Mark Manning was burned to the ground, and everything he ever owned—building, furniture, clothing, money—*all* was lost in the ruins! He was houseless and penniless the next morning, having barely escaped alive, with his wife and her infant, two months old. The land was left, however—a beautiful spot, which was mortgaged for five hundred dollars to old Robin Weston; and the note matured in a fortnight!

As may well be supposed, Mark Manning was deeply troubled. He did not believe his house would accidentally take fire within twenty *days* (to use his own expression), but he now realized that such an event was not impossible. His wife and child, must be provided for, however, and he put the best possible face upon this very unlucky accident. The estate was gone! The land was worth twelve hundred dollars, but he could not redeem his bond in season, and old Robin would take it—of course—for the unpaid note. He was "sorry he didn't get insured," he said.

The day the note matured, Mark Manning put his best and most cheerful face upon his embarrassment, and waited on the old miser, whom he thought it might be possible to arrange his affairs with, under the peculiarly unexpected, and (to Mark) unfortunate circumstances of the case; though, to tell the truth, he scarcely hoped for any lenity.

"Good morning, uncle," said the young man, as he entered his homely room; "hope you're well."

"Yes, yes, I'm well enough; what now?"

"I come to see you about my note, which is due to-day. I've got the notice—this is the last day of grace."

"Got the notice? Well, you've got the *money*, too, of course," replied old Robin, who knew better, however, because he was confident that the boy had lost everything in the burning; and as he never believed Mark would be able to pay him, he was angry to think that the default he anticipated (now that the house was destroyed) would have the effect of giving him possession of the *land* only, with but twelve hundred, instead of the whole estate, if the buildings had been left, worth double that sum!

"I am sorry to say, uncle, that I haven't a dollar to meet this note with."

"That is just what I expected, do you see, youngster," replied the old man, savagely. "I took care to secure myself, though—I mean to secure my friend who advanced the money; and if you can't pay, the land is mine, do you hear? I mean *his*."

"I did the best I could—"

"*Bah!* Why wasn't you insured, I'd like to know?"

"I had no money to spare for insurance. Every dollar I could scrape together, with economy and privation in my expenses, I laid by to meet this note with."

"That story wont do, my fine fellow. Where is it?"

"Burned up with all the rest."

"I don't believe a word of it; and more than that, I don't care whether I do or either. Pay the note, or the land must. There's no redemption, do you mind, after the setting of this day's sun. Read your bond; here it is; read it. Pay or play—that's all."

"But my wife and chi—"

"What have *I* to do wi' your wife and child, I'd like to know. You're paupers. I don't support paupers! Go to the town, or the dev—I mean, that is, I must have the money *to-day*."

"You have the power to help or hurt me, Robin, and my family, I know. But—"

"What is the like o' you doing with a wife and child, any way! That's the way wi' you spendthrift fools. Marry, have young ones, cheat the public, lie—and starve, if you please; *starve*, then! I'll have the money or the land. I'm busy; can't talk no more. Time's money wi' *me*. Get the five hundred dollars or not—the land will pay it."

"But look you now, uncle—"

"I will look at five hundred dollars, or look to the land, I tell you. Nothing else."

Mark Manning returned to his wife and infant with a heavy heart, but he was not totally dispirited. He would go to work, earn more, keep his head up, and laugh at old Robin's hard-fisted ugliness, yet. When the sun went down that day, Mark kissed his wife and baby, and said:

"Martha, we haven't got much to-night in this world, saving our health and this little one. It's a hard case, but we wont murmur. I can work a little harder. Fortune will smile on honest purposes and devoted industry, and though we shall be under the weather for a time, we'll believe that all will come out right, and for the best, in the end. Old Robin's note lies in the bank, and to-morrow will take possession of the poor remains of the homestead."

Before Martha could reply, a gentle rap was heard at the door of the dwelling they temporarily occupied, and Mark's partner entered to sympathize with his friends.

"Of course you haven't paid the note, Mark," he said, at once.

"No, Charles, I hadn't a dollar."

"I am sorry for all this. The laying over of that note—though Robin is secured, twice over, by his bond and mortgage—will hurt our credit in market seriously."

"I thought of this, Charles; but *might* is *right*, you know, too often. Robin had it all his own way, do you see. I can work as hard as you can, though you are my acknowledged superior in business tact and details. So we must go at it again a little more earnestly, and I will shortly recover from this blow. I lose my place, of course—that can't be helped, for the old man drew the bond in such a way that I have no right of redemption left, even. But he's an outrageous sharper, and I'm glad that I shall thus get out of his clutches; though it is rather expensive experience, to be sure, eh?"

"You should have been insured, Mark."

"That's what old Robin says. But I couldn't have insured the bank notes that are burned."

"Still you would thus have had something to have paid the note with, and the land would have been left at any rate."

"Yes—yes. It's too late to mourn, Charlie. Come! Give me your hand, and let's agree to forget all mistakes. In the future, I will act more advisedly;" and Mark put forth his hand cordially, to grasp the palm of his friend—who was his *real* friend, in spite of himself.

When he withdrew his hand, a paper that he noticed Charles held in his own, as he extended it towards him, fell to the floor. Mark picked it up, opened it mechanically, and found that it was his cancelled note for five hundred dollars, due that day to old Robin Weston!

"Why, Charlie, what is this?"

"Don't you recognize it?" asked his partner.

"It's *my note*—and paid! How came you by it?"

"I went to the bank to day, ten minutes before two o'clock, and paid it, that's all."

"You!"

"Yes, Mark. I met old Robin coming out. He had just been to the teller to inquire if the note had been paid, and he told him no."

"Good! good!" screamed Mark Manning, delighted. "But where—how did you get the money, pray?"

"On this insurance policy," responded his partner, instantly, taking from his pocket a document that told the story briefly. "When I advised you to get your house and furniture insured, Mark," said Charles, "and you talked about the improbability of a building's being burned down in twenty days, I thought if you would take such a risk, you were not so careful a man as you ought to be. *I* therefore applied for a policy of a thousand dollars on your house, the next day, and five hundred dollars upon your furniture. Your property was burned up in less than half the twenty days. The insurance was immediately paid me by the company, I paid your five hundred dollar note out of it, and here is the balance, one thousand dollars, with which you can rebuild your house, for your land is saved from the grasp of your skinflint 'uncle,' as you call him. Now I trust you will be more cautious in the future!"

Mark Manning and his wife never saw so happy an hour before, or afterwards, in their existence, as that which followed this fortunate and timely explanation. Verily, Charles Acton had been his partner's friend.

At a quarter past two o'clock, on the afternoon of the day upon which Mark's note matured, old Weston was promptly at the bank, to learn about it. All his papers had been duly prepared for taking formal possession of the forfeited estate, and his surprise and chagrin may be conceived when he was informed by the cashier that Mr. Manning's note had been paid, and taken up, before two o'clock, honorably.

He was foiled. But then he chuckled over the "operation," after all. He had made twenty-five per cent. upon his loan, any way! He got five hundred for four in one year, and that was not so bad. The boy had lied to him, plainly. He said he couldn't pay it. Never mind, he would turn his money again, and to better advantage, in the next twelvemonth. He went home, and early the next morning, Charles Acton—Mark's partner—called upon him, quite unexpectedly.

"You remember me, I presume, Mr. Weston," said Charles, upon entering.

The old man half nodded, and said "yes," very gruffly.

"You have recently had a transaction with my partner, Mr. Manning, in which you have overreached him, by charging him usurious interest. He has paid you one hundred dollars—*paid it*, I say—for the use of *four* hundred for one year."

"Well, what of that? He'll pay *more* next time."

"That may be. I trust he may never again need your aid, Mr. Weston. In the present instance, he can't afford to be swindled in this way, and you must refund him the extra seventy-five dollars which you have thus unlawfully exacted of him."

"Me! *Refund?* I pay back money—interest money? Ha! ha! That's really a capital joke, to be sure," roared the miser, laughing with rage and disappointment. "You're a nice pair; a very pretty team, *Acton & Manning;* a noble firm! Smart and enterprising, you and he! When you get back any over interest o' Robin Weston, let him know, wont you? Ha! ha!"

"The law is explicit, Mr. Weston," continued Harry, never for one instant losing his self-possession; "and you know, as well as any man, that usury is punishable with a cost equal to three times the amount of extra interest taken by any one in a business way. If you wish to pay two hundred and seventy-five dollars, instead of seventy five, do so—it matters nothing to me. If you do not pay the latter, at once, you *shall* pay the former, on my honor!"

"How'll you get it, my fine gentleman?" exclaimed the cornered old man, between his teeth. "You'll sue for it, eh? Sue away! You'll find a great deal of property belonging to old Robin Weston. O, yes, he always leaves his means exposed to such drawbacks; of course he does! Sue, then. 'Sue a beggar, catch a flea,' you know. Ha! ha!"

"I have already taken care of this part of the business, Mr. Weston. I never do things by halves, you see. Determining yesterday to proceed against you, unless you were disposed to do what is right in this matter, I watched for the payment of my partner's note in the bank, and ten minutes after the money was paid there, I trusted it in the hands of the bank, to secure what belongs to us in case you refused to do what is honorable."

The eyes of the miser glared like two balls of fire, and had not Acton been by far the strongest of the two men, he might have been personally assailed by the desperate old skinflint, who was almost beside himself to see that he was thus being handled by the young merchant, whom he had so nearly injured through his partner. But there was no dodging this issue, and Weston was compelled to disagree. His money was fast locked in the bank, and the law was clear. He paid back the extra interest with a good many qualms and qualms, and Acton discontinued his suit against him on the same day.

Mark rebuilt his house; old Robin did his note-shaving with more care, and as less extortionate rates, after this; the firm of Acton & Manning continued to progress and prosper; and though, in this instance, for a time *might* prevailed, yet, in the end, *right* was triumphant.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THINK OF ME.

BY JULIA ASHTON.

Remember me when twilight throws
Her shadowy wing around,
When earth seems sinking to repose,
And hushed is every sound.
Then think of me.

I'll ask thee not in mirth's gay hour,
When song and jest pass fleeting by,
When o'er thee memory has no power
To draw one tear, or recreant sigh,
To think of me.

But think of me at twilight hour,
When all around seems sweet and fair,
When mirth and jest have lost their power,
O, I would be remembered there,
Then think of me.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## A CLOUD WITH A SILVER LINING.

BY JESSIE ANTHON.

"Charlie! Charlie!" shouted a merry, childish voice; and a laughing girl bounded from the steps of a fairy-like summer house, in the spacious garden which joined the elegant country seat of Alfred Saunders, the wealthy merchant, as she called again, "Come, Charlie! Father wants you!"

He heard her not; but just beyond the shadow of the elm-tree, where the golden arrows of sunset shot through its graceful branches, and then as it were shivering in a thousand fragments, stole away in the rich moss-cups at his feet, he stood with those blue dreamy eyes fixed earnestly upon the gorgeous tints of gold and purple, lending their rainbow hues of glory to the fleecy clouds dotting the western sky.

Her hand was on his shoulder, and her warm breath kissed his cheeks, before he noticed her approach; then turning suddenly, as one aroused from slumber, he said:

"Did you call me, Lida? I thought it was her."

"Who?" asked the wondering child.

"My mother!" said the boy, earnestly. "I saw her on that fleecy cloud, not pale and cold as when I last remember, but with the old smile on her lip which she used to wear when she talked to me of heaven. She put her arms out as if she would embrace me, and murmured 'Come.' I turned, and it was you! Why did you call me, Lida?"

"O, I had almost forgot. Father wants you right away. Hark! he's coming. O, Charlie, what will you do?"

She had hardly spoken, when a stern hand grasped the boy's right arm, and a heavy blow was dealt upon his head, as the angry man exclaimed: "I'll teach you to come when I send for you."

"Please, father, he did not hear me," pleaded Lida, timidly.

"O, no, I dare say he didn't! Dreaming again, I suppose! What did you see in the clouds, boy?" he asked, in a sneering tone.

"The face of my dead mother, sir!" replied the boy, as he fixed his calm gaze upon the flashing eye of the angry man.

Had a scorpion stung him, Mr. Saunders could not have started more suddenly, and his voice was hoarse with passion, as he exclaimed:

"Get to your attic, sirrah! There'll be no supper for you to-night!"

So familiar had these words become to Charlie Graham, that he scarcely heard them, although fully comprehending their meaning, and turning away, he entered the house; while Lida stole tearfully off to the summer-house, where she wept until her eyes were red, then going to the marble basin, where the gold fish glanced in the sunset, she washed her swollen lids, and went to beg some supper for Charlie from the old housekeeper.

Lida had no mother, for Mrs. Saunders, a gentle, timid creature, born to be loved and cherished, as some pet plant, soon withered in the splendid home to which her husband bore her. It was not external grandeur which she coveted, but her heart longed with a painful yearning for companionship and love; and when Lida was but two years old, they laid her mother away in a sunny nook in the garden, and reared a splendid monument above her still remains. Its motto should have been "A Martyr," but Mr. Saunders prepared a long eulogium upon her worth and excellence, and so Lida would stroll away to the tombstone, and spelling out the long words, wonder if she should ever be as good as her mother. Strange that Mr. Saunders could find nothing to praise in his beautiful wife until after her death!

Lida inherited her mother's beauty. She had the same soft hazel eyes, the same luxuriant hair, so brown in the shadow, so golden in the sunlight; but that broad, white brow was her father's, and with it she possessed something of his proud and haughty spirit, but so intimately was it blended with the timid gentleness of her mother's nature, that one failed to perceive it, except when she was angry. Then the soft eye would flash, and words of withering scorn fall from those gentle lips. She had, too, the warm loving heart of her buried parent, embracing in its tenderness every human being, but reserving its wealth of love to be lavished upon Charlie Graham, the orphan boy, who resided in her father's family.

There was a bitter smile upon the boy's finely-curved lip, as he entered that low attic, and folding his arms tightly across his throbbing heart, he paced the small room to and fro.

"What is it to be an orphan?" he passionately exclaimed. "Is it to eat the bread of bitterness, and drain the dregs of the wormwood and the gall—to have the very life-blood drawn drop after drop from the fainting spirit, and the quivering fragments trampled beneath the iron shod foot of an unfeeling world? My mother! O, my mother! come back to me again, and tell me of that bright land where there are no more tears!"

He glanced from the window as he spoke, but it was in vain that the sunset clouds wooed his artist eyes, and drooping his head listlessly upon the broad sill, he suffered Fancy to carry him back as far as Memory would lead her.

He must have been very young, not more than four years old, he thought. But how distinctly he remembered one bright sunny day, as he walked by his mother in the crowded city. He remembered that a little girl, about his own age, was skipping gaily along before him, holding tightly to the hand of her father, who, when they came to a crossing, would lift her lightly by her tiny arms, and jump her over the curb-stones; her merry laugh sounded so joyous that he laughed, too, and tried to jump himself across after her. Turning at his laugh, the little girl eyed him closely for a moment, and then pursing up her dainty little mouth, said: "You needn't laugh, you haven't got any father to jump you over the curb-stones." He remembered his mother's tightening grasp upon his hand; and how much faster they walked until they reached the crazy old building they called home, when clasping him in her arms, she half smothered him with kisses, as she murmured:

"God bless thee, my orphan boy!"

He never had a father, for he was yet unborn when Edward Graham, kissing his young wife's soft cheek, said, tenderly:

"Do not sit up for me, Jennie, I may be detained quite late;" and went out to transact some business.

His kiss was yet warm on her lip, and her heart went up in silent thankfulness to the beneficent Creator for her many blessings, when stern men entered bearing the lifeless body of her beloved husband, felled in the pride of manly strength by the ruffian blow of the assassin.

All night she lay in blessed unconsciousness, after the first glance upon that rigid form, passing from one fainting fit to another so rapidly that life was utterly despaired of. She heard not the low wail of the tiny babe, whose helplessness appealed to the hearts of the kind neighbors who surrounded her; but when consciousness at last returned, and with it came the agony of bereavement, she turned away her face, scarcely less pallid than the snowy pillow, and prayed to die. Her eye rested upon her babe beside her, and for his sake she asked to live, and baptizing him with her tears, she named him Charlie. Slowly and wearily the weeks passed by to that stricken wife, and when at last she went forth from that sick room, so pale and wan that the eye involuntarily filled with tears to gaze upon her, she found that the storm-clouds were but gathering more thickly about her. Her husband's affairs, embarrassed by his sudden death, had become more and more entangled during her long illness, and when she had satisfied rapacious creditors and grasping lawyers, she found herself almost penniless, with her babe to provide for. Procuring a small room in an obscure part of the city, she endeavored to obtain employment; but scanty was the sustenance which she received, and many a night when little Charlie slept the unconscious sleep of childhood, she sat far into the midnight bending over her work, with difficulty restraining the rushing tears lest they might soil the rich fabric on which she toiled.

Bravely she struggled on, the pale mother and her fragile child, until his tenth year. Tears had been his birth welcome, and nightly when he slept tears bedewed his head. Life, even then, seemed desolate to Charlie, although his mother's presence gladdened the old house, but when he awoke one bright morning, and called his mother, who answered not to his passionate entreaties for one word—when the truth flashed upon him that she was dead—when he looked upon that still, white face beneath the coffin lid—then he felt that poverty was a blessing in comparison with this, his first bereavement.

Mr. Saunders, the rich merchant, took pity (so the neighbors said, but may Heaven shield us from such pity!) on the poor boy, and took him to his splendid home, immediately after the funeral. Charlie's old home had seemed dreary enough, but when he stood in those elegantly-furnished parlors, and cast stealthy glances at the dark, stern man, whom he called master, he longed for the small room with its single window, where he used to watch the shadows as they crept across the street, and wonder if heaven was very far off, and if he should have bread enough there. He never had time to watch the shadows now, for Mr. Saunders would have no idle dreamers about him, and so with a weary frame and a still more weary heart, he toiled on, with nought, save the love of Lida, to gild his dark pathway.

All these things he mused on, as he sat there alone in his lonely attic, on that bright summer's eve. Little he cared for the shadows now. They had mocked him long enough, too; and now he had made up his mind, once for all, he would never sleep in that attic again; and the dreamy light faded from his eye, as he raised his head, and said, decidedly: "I'll do it!"

"May I come in, Charlie? It is only me," said a soft, timid voice at the open door.

"Yes, Lida, come in," said the boy. "True, it is only you, and it is only you that cares for me in the wide world—only you that comes between me and the grave."

The young girl said nothing to this, but taking from under her apron a plate of cake and a warm biscuit, she placed them on the small stand before him, saying, as she did so: "I tried to get some milk, but father was in the pantry."

"I cannot eat," replied the boy; "it would choke me; but come closer to me, and do not tremble so. I have something to tell you;" and drawing her closely to him, he whispered softly, as if half afraid the walls might echo back his voice, "I am going to run away to night."

"No, Charlie, you will not leave me!" sobbed Lida.

"Listen to me, Lida: We are both young; you are but twelve, and I fifteen; but we are old in sorrow. Your young life is bitterness, and to mine there has been no summer. During the six years I have toiled here, how have I been repaid? By kicks and curses, such as one might bestow on a stupid beast. Blows do not hurt me, Lida, but they fall upon my heart, and they crush my life out. Shall I bear this? No!"

A world of scorn was centered in the one word "No," as it came from the boy's compressed lips; and drawing his slight form proudly erect, he continued: "I will be worthy of your love some day! Not as a mean slave, to be sent here and there at the will of an imperious master, but a man! Can you ask me to stay?"

Looking up through her tears, with a voice all tremulous with emotion, she said:

"No, Charlie; go! But I—"

"You," said Charlie, interrupting her, "will bear up bravely with that strong heart of yours. Your father loves you. He is seldom stern to you, and I shall come back sometime, and claim my little wife."

Just then a voice called "Lida," and with one kiss upon her bright lips, and a whispered "God bless you!" he let go her hand, and she was gone.

Twilight draped her shadowy curtain over the sunset clouds, and the moon came out, casting broad sheets of silver on the velvet turf, when Charlie Graham stole down from the attic. The fringed trees drooped their graceful branches as if to cool the fevered brow of the boy, as he passed beneath them, to cast a lingering glance toward the dainty chamber where Lida pressed her pillow in a vain attempt to sleep; but a low and loving benediction seemed floating through the leafy whisperings of the trees which nodded in the moonlight, and with a hopeful, trusting heart, the boy went on.

"Here the sun has been up this half hour, and that lazy boy is in bed yet," muttered Mr. Saunders, as he mounted the stairs leading to the attic.

The door was open, and he entered the room, shouting, "Get up here, you young rascal!" But there was no Charlie there. The low cot was untumbled, and the boy—gone! No, it could not be—he would ask Lida. But Lida was mute, and no traces of Charlie could be discovered; so Mr. Saunders contented himself with complaining to the neighbors of "the ungrateful scamp," to run away when he had done so much for him. But they shook their heads knowingly, as they said to themselves, "Various opinions about that, Mr. Saunders; various opinions about that!"

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Six years had passed in Lida Saunders, and she had heard but once from Charlie, and then very briefly; a wee bit of a letter, which a ragged old sailor had given her about two years since. In that he told her of success, and bade her remember her childish promise. She had cherished his image in her heart, and invested it with every grace of mind and person, until he had become, as it were, deified to her imagination. As yet she had seen no one who reached this ideal to perfection, and so his image remained undimmed. At times the thought came that he might find a new love in his distant wanderings, and give to another her place in his heart, but she rejected it as unworthy of him, and hoped on, although it did seem as if he might have settled his affairs in two years. Now, as she sat by the open window, and read again the tiny note, so brief, and yet containing such volumes of love and tenderness, she murmured:

"It is six years to-night since he went away."

A quick, convulsive shudder crept over her slight frame as she spoke. Perhaps it might have been the cool breeze from the open window? No, not that; the air is hot and oppressive—there is not breath enough to float a leaf; thick, heavy clouds are floating through the sky, at intervals come long, low peals of muttering thunder. But there are tears in the soft eyes of Lida—a moment they tremble on her long lashes, and then flash like diamonds upon the glossy satin that shrouds her delicate figure. Shrouds!—yes! for in one hour more she will be a bride, and she must give her hand where her heart goes not. She had entreated to be left alone one hour, and now that the last orange-bud had been twined in her rich brown hair, the graceful fall of the bridal veil again and again adjusted, and the satin slipper fitted to her foot, her attendants left her. A moment she stood before the splendid mirror, that reflected her richly-robed figure, and exclaimed, bitterly:

"O, any night but this! Had they chosen any other night than this, I could have borne it; but this, so fraught with olden memories. My father! O, my father! may God forgive you!"

Turning to a rosewood casket by her side, she took from it the letter so carefully cherished as the only memento of Charlie, and sat down by the window to read the loving words of hope, so torturing to her full heart, because so vain.

It was a little more than two months since Henry Mason, a bachelor of about twice her age, had attempted to pay his addresses to her, but she shrank from him with a loathing which she could not disguise. At last he appealed from the daughter to the father, and Lida well remembered the evening when her father, calling her into the parlor, had commanded her to receive Mr. Mason as her future husband.

All the pride and strength of Lida's spirit rose to her lips, as she replied: "Never! Command me in anything but this, and I will obey; but this I cannot. Urge me no more!"

Smothering his rage, her father merely asked: "Why not?"

"Because I do not love him," was the reply.

"Pshaw! stuff and nonsense!" said the father. "Your mother did not love me when we were married, but we got along very comfortably—very comfortably, indeed. Love is nothing—wealth is the main thing. Mr. Mason is rich. He is worth an immense fortune."

Lida glanced toward the garden, where the white head stone of her mother's grave gleamed through the trees, and there were tears in her eyes, as she answered: "Is the bird prisoned from the wild-wood-tree, happier because his cage is gilded? It is useless, I can never be the bride of Henry Mason."

Mr. Saunders arose, and taking Lida by the hand, led her out upon the broad piazza which ran around the house. A lovely prospect lay before them; the elegant garden, a mazy labyrinth of beauty, where every variety of fruit trees were bending beneath their luscious burden, its trellised flowers, and gravelled walks, fragrant with delicious perfumes, and musical with bird-songs and the "sparry rain" of silvery fountains; while just beyond were waving fields of golden grain, nodding to the husbandman, as if to say, "come, I am waiting for the reapers," and over all, the setting sun cast a golden glory, which seemed to beautify everything on which it lingered.

"Is it not beautiful, my daughter?" said Mr. Saunders, when they had gazed in silence for a moment upon the enchanting scene.

The calm and holy beauty of the hour had cast its softening influence upon the young girl's heart, and she murmured, "Yes, father, it is indeed beautiful! and why should you wish me to exchange it for the brick walls and close air of the pent-up city? I know," she said, as she caught her father's eye, "you did but wish to try me. You only wanted to see if I was content with you; if I did not pine for the gaieties of city life?"

"My child! my child!" cried her father, moved in spite of himself, "you know not what you say. We must leave this place, must bid farewell to your childhood's home, unless you consent to marry Henry Mason. In an evil hour I endorsed a note, which, covering the whole of my fortune, is in the hands of Mr. Mason, and we are beggars unless you become his bride."

"Let us go, my father!" said Lida, firmly. "Better wear the iron chain of poverty than the gilded crown of wealth."

"No, no," cried her father. "You will not drive me from my home to toil for my daily bread? You will not do this, Lida?"

"I will toil—I will work! I can! O any thing but this hateful marriage. It is an unjust debt. I will plead with him."

"You would but humble yourself in vain," replied her father. "From the hour when he first saw you, he swore that you should be his bride. He loves you madly."

"Loves?" said Lida, in a tone of withering scorn. "He loves me not, and I will not be his bride."

Unclasping the clinging arms of his daughter, Mr. Saunders shouted in a stern voice,—"Marry Henry Mason, or may the curse—"

"O, curse me not, my father!" cried Lida.

"Marry this man, or may the curse—"

"Father, father," murmured Lida, "I will marry him."

They had fixed the day. Lida could have but two weeks more of freedom, and she moved about so wan, so tearless, that even the stern heart of her father half relented, as he gazed on her, but a second thought would banish all tenderness, and the arrangement for the bridal went on unchecked. She had no hope—she knew that life must henceforth be a lingering heartache, from which there could be no respite save in the grave.

The necessary papers had been drawn up the previous day, and all was prepared for the sacrifice. Lida heard the light laugh of the wedding guests assembled in the parlors below; the robin sang sweetly on the limbs of the old apple tree that shaded her window, but they were alike unheeded. The deep and ominous silence which brooded over nature had increased, broken only by the distant thunder, and Lida shuddered as the silvery chimes of the French clock on the mantel told her that the hours of freedom had expired. Crushing the letter in her jewelled hands, she leaned her head against the window frames, but a blinding sheet of lightning caused her to start and turn away.

Five, ten, fifteen minutes past seven, and yet the bridegroom tarried. What could it mean? Just at this moment his panting steed dashed up to the door, but he was riderless.

The storm was on them in its blinding fury, but hastily they traced the way back through the gushing rain. They needed not to go far, for on the velvet turf, where his life-blood stained the green sward, lay the body of Mr. Mason. He had ridden very swiftly to escape the storm, and his restless steed, goaded on by the whip and alarmed by the broad glare of the lightning, had reared and pranced until he threw his rider senseless to the ground, when he dashed off to the house. Carefully they bore him to the dwelling of Mr. Saunders, and although Lida shuddered and wept as she gazed on the almost lifeless form—a mute thanksgiving struggled with her tears.

Very slowly Mr. Mason recovered, and through his long illness Lida tended him with unwearied patience. Thus two months had passed, and as yet no allusion had been made on either side to their intended marriage. Lida could but rejoice in the blessed respite, and prayed that the cup of bitterness might not again be pressed to her lips.

It was one of those warm, bright days which come upon us so like a glad surprise amid the chilly winds of early autumn, when Mr. Mason, tempted by the dreamy hush of nature in her dying loveliness, requested to have his easy chair wheeled out upon the piazza. As Lida sat by his side, Mr. Mason said:

"I have been seeking an opportunity to talk with you for a long time. You know we were to have been married that evening when I was thrown from my horse, and so narrowly escaped death."

"Yes, yes," said Lida, "I know. I am your affianced bride." Her voice was firm, and her eyes were tearless now.

"Lida, you do not love me," said Mr. Mason, sadly.

She hesitated a moment, and then replied: "I do not. You have always known it. It was but to save my father from ruin that I consented to become your wife. But why call up these harrowing thoughts? I have promised and I am ready." Her head drooped upon her clasped hands, and again the tears trickled through her jewelled fingers.

"Noble girl!" exclaimed her companion "it shall not be. Sickness is a stern teacher; and as I have seen you in your youth and beauty watching and tending with the gentlest care, one whom in your heart you loathed and hated, one whose death would have been to you a blessing; when I have seen you thus, my heart has reproached me, that I could have been so base as to seek to force you to a marriage, from which your whole soul revolted. I have watched you closely, and it has but made me love you the more deeply; but it is this very love which bids me give you up; for I could not bear to join your fate with mine, and watch the slow wane of love and hope from your young heart. From this moment, your father is absolved from the unjust debt, and you are as free as the light breeze which lifts yon faded leaf."

Lida clasped the thin hand of her companion, and her warm tears rained upon it; she could not speak—her heart was too full for utterance.

Taking advantage of her silence, he continued: "Could you love me, my whole life should be devoted to your happiness, Lida," and his frame trembled as he spoke; "I offer you the worship of a heart which never before has owned the spell of beauty. I have travelled in many lands, have gazed upon the dreamy beauty of the fair Circassian, have circled in the mazy dance with the proudest dames of France, and the loveliest of Spain's dark-eyed maidens; I have seen every phase of Oriental beauty, and mingled with the fairest of our own America's bright daughters, but until I saw your sweet face, I knew not what it was to love. Almost maddened by your chilling repulses, I swore you should be mine; but when I deemed the prize my own, I found myself arrested by a power which I could not control. My love purified by illness, has also been strengthened, but I give you up. Could you love me—but it is vain! I am older than you, it is true, but I can offer you the freshness of a first love."

Turning away her head, that she might not see the pain she must inflict, she told him, calmly and firmly, that she did not—that she could not love him—and—she blushed, and hesitated.

"You would say that your heart is pre-engaged!" he murmured, sadly.

Gathering courage from his gentle tone, she told him all. He started slightly as she mentioned his rival's name, and when she had concluded, asked, "Charles Graham, did you say? Had he blue, dreamy eyes, soft as a hazy cloud, dark, brown hair, clustering in wavy curls around a clear lofty brow?"

"Yes," cried Lida, while a bright spot glowed upon her pale cheeks. "Do you know him? Have you seen him? Where is he?"

"Here!" said a manly voice behind her, and turning quickly, she was folded to the heart of Charles Graham, who had approached the house unnoticed, just in time to hear Lida ask, "Where is he?" Although he was not aware that he was the subject of their conversation, he had ventured to clasp Lida in his arms again as of yore, and kiss after kiss was pressed upon her lips, before she realized the fullness of her joy; then blushing as she thought of Mr. Mason, she turned to introduce the new-comer, but was greatly surprised to see them shake hands warmly, with mutual exclamations of astonishment at their unexpected meeting.

"We are old friends," he said to Lida's glance of inquiry. "It is some three years since we cruised together for so many months, but of that hereafter. Why do I find you here looking so pale and ghostly, Harry?"

"I was thrown from my horse some months ago," replied Mr. Mason; "but thanks to my gentle nurse, I am now gaining strength quite rapidly."

"I fear," said Lida, gaily, "you will not do your nurse much credit, if you remain here longer, for the breeze comes up quite cool from the water; and we will adjourn to the parlor."

"Lean on my arm," said Charlie.

"I am a prisoner to my chair," replied his friend; and Lida was already in quest of a servant to assist in wheeling back the invalid.

"To my own room," said Mr. Mason, as they turned toward the parlor. "I would be alone," he added, while a painful flush crossed his face.

Lida understood the reason, and her own brow was clouded for a moment; but when she reentered the parlor with Charlie, she was far too happy in the joy of his return to have a thought of sadness. How like a troubled dream seemed the past six years, now that the silver lining of the cloud appeared.

Breathless she listened as he told her of his wanderings—of his voyage across the ocean—of weary days when life had seemed a burden—of his chance meeting with an eccentric uncle who had left home years ago, and had accumulated an immense fortune—how he had kept him roaming from one foreign port to another—until his death had freed Charlie from his restraint and made him heir to his immense fortune—that he had been detained by all sorts of adventures till he had been ready to despair—but at last had come to claim his bride.

Just then a heavy step was heard in the room adjoining, and again as of old, Lida asked: "What will you do? It is my father!"

Until then, no thought of opposition had crossed the minds of either Lida or her lover; but now, the memory of that stern man came between them and their love, but he passed the parlor, and entered the room of Mr. Mason. What passed between them there we know not, but they sat long in earnest conversation, and when Mr. Saunders entered the parlor there was a pleasant smile upon his face. Grasping the proffered hand of Charlie, who with Lida had advanced to meet him, he exclaimed, "Charlie, my boy, forgive me! How can I atone for past injustice?"

"We cannot recall the past," was the young man's reply. "Let bygones be bygones! but I have a boon to crave," and he looked at Lida.

"I know what you would ask," said Mr. Saunders. "Take her, you are worthy of each other," and he placed the hand of Lida within that of her lover.


### NEW PUBLICATION.

THE ROVER'S DAUGHTER. By Ernestine Bennett. Published by T. B. Peterson, Philadelphia.

This, like nearly all the other of Mr. Bennett's productions, is no American story, and describes in that bold and lofty manner peculiar to the author, traits of western character. Like a true artist, Mr. Bennett, as he ranges his colors, that by contrast the peculiarities of each shall be distinctly observable, while at the same time the whole united forms a picture of interest and beauty. The manner in which the every incidents of Lara unfolds, the heroine, the emphatic honesty, blended with indomitable nervousness of Carlos, the hard Buccaneer, and the crafty cunning and obedience of Pomba, an Indian slave, are brought out and made to pass before the vision of the reader, as every way worthy the pen of Cooper.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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*,* All communications designed for publication in the paper, must be addressed to M. M. BALLOU, Boston, Mass. *proprietor of* THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, *post paid.*

CONTENTS OF OUR NEXT NUMBER.

"How she found the Time," a tale by Mrs. CAROLINE A. SOULE.

"Jerry Plum's Schooner meets a Pirate," a sea sketch by HENRY MARTIN.

"The Hero and the Traitor," an historical tale by ELLEN EGGLESTON.

"A House of my own," a story by PERLEY HARRIS.

"To my absent Husband," stanzas by MARY LIDA.

"Song for the Season," by ANNIE LEE.

"Agnes," a poem by WILLIE E. TABOR.

"The Sunny Side," verses by CLARENCE MELVIN.

ARTICLES DECLINED.

"How the great Umbagog looks," "The Cemetery," "The Conceptive," "Verses on Spring," "Tell me truly," and "Spring."

## PERSEVERANCE.

Perseverance will break through stone walls, shovel down mountains, bore Hoosac tunnels, and accomplish any other marvel that the will commands. It is only necessary to take *nil desperandum* for your motto, and go ahead. Don't be discouraged by a few failures—remember that "there's no such word as fail" in any American dictionary. Failure belongs to the old school—not to the modern. Do not abandon hopes of success in life till you have tried everything. When Miller was requested to take the battery at Lundy's Lane, he replied, "I'll try;" and he did try, and he executed the order. It's no sort of use to say that it's no sort of use to try to do this and that—if you were only a few years younger—it's too late to learn, etc. These are excuses unworthy of a man. It is never too late to attempt anything till your physician has given you up, and the undertaker has taken your measure; and even then—and even then you may baffle death and the doctor. Alexander Dumas, the most prolific and popular of French authors—to give a single example of the fruits of perseverance,—at the age of twenty, had no capital, but a sound constitution, with scarcely any education. He posted up to Paris, with fifty-three francs in his pocket, resolved not only to deserve, but to command success. He called upon General Foy, the representative from his department, and asked his assistance.

"Let us see what we can make of you," said the general.

"Whatever you like, general," was the reply.

"I must first find out what you are fitted for. What do you know? A little mathematics—eh?"

"No, general."

"You have at least some notions of geometry, of physics?"

"No, general."

"You have taken a degree?"

"No, general."

"You know Latin and Greek?"

"A few words."

"Perhaps you understand book-keeping?"

"*Tout au contraire*—not a bit of it."

His protector was completely nonplussed.

"Well," he said, at last, "I'll think what I can put you to. In the meantime, write me your address."

Young Dumas took up a pen and complied with the request.

"I have it," exclaimed the general, as he glanced at the address. "You write a handsome hand. You are saved, my boy."

He was immediately appointed despatch clerk to the Duke of Orleans, with a salary of fifteen hundred francs a year.

"Then," says Dumas, "began that obstinate struggle of my will, a struggle the more strange as it had no fixed object, the more persevering that I had everything to learn. Employed eight hours in the day-time at my office, forced to return to it every evening, from seven to ten o'clock, my nights alone were mine. It was during these feverish vigils that I formed the habit, always kept up, of that night labor, which renders my work incomprehensible to my friends, for they cannot imagine at what hour, or time, I accomplish it."

Complete success crowned the persevering efforts of the young aspirant to fame and fortune. In an incredibly short space of time he acquired a large fund of information. He wrote with astonishing rapidity—tragedies, farces, history, travels, novels, biographies, have been poured forth with a prodigality that attests the fertility of his resources. In the year 1840 he published twenty volumes, 8vo. To be sure, there is much less on a French book page than on one of ours, but the matter would probably have filled five or six of our thick duodecimos. The resolute bending of all one's energies to the accomplishment of a settled purpose, is sure to be successful. "Everything is possible to him who wills," as the French republicans at Marseilles said to Kossuth, is a safe and truthful motto.

MURDERING THE KING'S ENGLISH.—Our late lamented friend, Dulcimer Popkins, who lived before the days of Mrs. Partington, was once despatched for the coroner to hold an inquest on the remains of an unfortunate female who had suicided herself, as the French say. On being asked what the matter was, Dulcimer replied: "Matter! murder's the matter—and thunderation, and desperation, and all sorts of devilments. There's a woman been committing suicide on somebody, and I'm going after the foreigner to hold a conquest on the remains."

CRAVATS.—These articles of dress were invented by a nobleman, who was brought to life after being hung for highway robbery, and on whose neck the rope made such a permanent impression that he was compelled to devise this mode of concealing it.

## AMERICAN AND ENGLISH WOMEN.

An American girl at eighteen is one of the most beautiful of living beings, but most American women at thirty are *passées*. At forty an English lady is in the very prime and flower of her beauty—witness the descriptions given us of the Countess of Blessington at that age. Something is due, of course, to the difference of climate. The moist, moderate climate of England is a greater respecter of feminine charms, than ours, dry and parching in summer, and piercingly cold in winter. In certain localities—such as Newport, R. I., for instance, female beauty has a fair chance. But the difference is rather attributable to different habits of living. The American leads an indoor life, and is acenstomed to a green-house atmosphere. She takes very little exercise abroad, and when she does, is illy protected, as a general thing, against the exigencies of the weather. Of late, there has been some improvement in the out-door of our ladies, however. Instead of the light French boots in which our women used to paddle through the slush and mire, they are beginning pretty generally to wear stout water-proof boots. A pretty foot daintily shod is an "excellent thing in woman," but not when consumption is the penalty of displaying it. But our women do not use enough out-door exercise. The English woman rides, drives, walks and practises archery and other exercises in the open air. She makes nothing of a five mile walk before dinner—or a gallop of twelve or fifteen miles in a morning. But she is properly clad for pedestrian and equestrian excursions. It is this habit of exercise which enables the English girl in fashionable life to endure the fatigues of the London season; and we all know that is trying. Willis tells us when he called on Lady Blessington in the afternoon, he was told she had not breakfasted. The result of the different mode of life is that the beauty of the Englishwoman is perennial, while that of her American sister is fleeting. One is a hot-house plant that withers on exposure, the other is a hardy tree that flourishes in every phase of weather.

## THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

In the good old feudal times of which we hear so much, a noble might take the life of a vassal with impunity. The following incident occurred in France as lately as 1725. A titled scoundrel, the Count of Charolais, returning from hunting, saw a peasant in the village of Aret quietly seated on his doorstep. "I wonder if I could hit the fellow!" said the count, to himself. Bringing his piece to his shoulder, he took deliberate aim, fired, and his victim fell, stone dead. The only inconvenience the count had from this affair, was the necessity of going to the regent, stating the case, and asking pardon for the offence. "Sir," replied the regent, "the pardon you request of me is due to your rank and quality as prince of the blood. The king pardons you, but he would much more willingly pardon the man who should serve you in the same manner." Yet when the people rose in their might, maddened by atrocities like these, and swept away the feudal system, Burke could lament that the age of chivalry was gone!

A SANDWICH ISLAND SABBATH.—Honolulu is said to enjoy the quietest Sabbath on the face of the whole earth. The penal code of the Sandwich Islands, declares that "the Lord's day is *taboo;* all worldly business, amusements and recreations are forbidden on that day; and whoever shall keep open his shop, store, warehouse or workshop, or shall do any manner of labor, business or work, except only works of necessity and charity, or be present at any dancing, public amusement, show, or entertainment, or take part in any game, sport, or play on the Lord's day, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding ten dollars."

ORDERED TO SEBASTOPOL.—The New York Tribune learns from Washington, that our government have detached Col. Richard Delafield, of the Engineers, Major Alfred Mordecai, of the Ordnance, and Capt. Geo. B. McClelland, of the Cavalry, on special duty, to proceed to Sebastopol, to inspect the works there, and view the operations of the war. They are ordered to depart as soon as possible. It is supposed that their official credentials will give them free access to the camps without, and the fortresses within, the city.

THE DIFFERENCE.—It was the opinion of a "learned Theban," that he who killed an antagonist with a long weapon drawn from a scabbard, was a man of honor, but if with a short one drawn from his pocket, a villain. This is the difference between the sword and the knife. He who kills one man—is a murderer—he who slaughters thousands, a hero.

ONE OF 'EM.—The other day a gentleman gave a couple of cents to a woman who asked charity of him. "Two cents!" she exclaimed. "Take 'em back, sir. I asked for charity. I can't do anything with two cents." "My dear madam," said the gentleman, "I beg you'll keep the cents, and—give them to some poor person."

THE PICTORIAL.—Those of the readers of the Flag who are not in the regular receipt of the "Pictorial," should not fail to observe the constant improvements which we are making in our illustrated journal. It will be remembered that we send the two to one address, for $4 a year.

NOT SATE.—The American flag in Cuba! This fact is a stigma upon the present administration. No one promised better than Mr. Pierce, in his inaugural message, but then, promises cost nothing, and sounded very patriotic!

GAS VS. OIL.—The streets of Nantucket are now lighted with gas, and present a brilliant and cheerful appearance. What will the whales say now?

THE CONTRAST.—A writer in the Christian Examiner, says: "Fame is like doubloons of Spain—popularity like Western bank notes."

## EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

The spirits who communicate by rappings have a chief named King, born 14,000 years ago.

Shad are plenty in the Connecticut river now. The fishermen "come like shad-ers, so depart."

Some of the critics think Mrs. Hudson Kirby's performance of Norma superior to Mrs. Hayne's.

Mr. Elijah Luce, an old man of Tisbury, was killed by falling from his chair.

Banvard's panorama of the Holy land has met with extraordinary success here.

Major John H. Eastburn has held the office of city printer for twenty-seven years.

Mr. Snow of Greenwich, Mass., shot a wild goose with a single ball at 40 rods.

There were 323,112 persons who emigrated from G. Britain to various parts of the world in 1854.

Jenny Lind has taken Holland by storm. The Dutchman leaves his pipe to listen to hers.

Sawed lumber from Canada is admitted free in the U. S. The Johnnies may cut sticks now.

The wine and liquor sales at the Astor House amount to three or four hundred dollars a day.

Sixty Irishmen shipped at Boston for Halifax on false pretences—are to be placed in the army.

Jurors are made judges of the law and fact by the late act of our Legislature.

It is said several milliners in New York have grown rich, and now patronize the dressmakers.

A sailor lately returned home to New Haven, after an absence of thirty-four years. Poor Jack!

A French author has written a book called—"The duty of pretty women to look pretty."

The unfortunate militia drafted for the Crimea are first drawn and then quartered.

A beautiful woman is a brilliant poem full of rhyme, sentiment and illustration.

Mr. Monroe, a Massachusetts representative, has been to church twice a day for forty years.

The Ravel troup will open here about the 4th of July. They are always popular.

The Baroness de Marguerites, now Mrs. C. G. Foster, has a work in press called "Life in Paris."

## HORSEMANSHIP.

The season has now arrived when our "fair women and brave men" will have an opportunity to "witch the world with noble horsemanship. We have heard of several May-day cavalcades upon the carpet, and we hope they will not remain there, but be carried out upon the road. We trust the weather may be propitious, and that the maiden may smile like a goddess, and not frown like a scold upon her votaries. Vivian Grey says the "the sight of a spur is enough to prevent a man from committing suicide." We think the sight of a spur might have the opposite effect in a confirmed pedestrian, provided he knew that there was no horse forthcoming to answer to the spur. If horsemanship were more generally practised, we should see fewer pale faces and sunken cheeks among the fair votaries of fashion, who at noontide throng the sidewalks of Washington and Beacon streets. When Fanny Kemble was the rage, that is, when she was Fanny Kenble, and wasn't Mrs. Butler—her equestrian example set all our ladies agog for riding on horseback. The saddlery business received a tremendous impetus—saddle horses went up fifty per cent., and you couldn't pass through a street at four in the afternoon without seeing spirited nags with side-saddles, waiting here and there for their fair riders, champing their bits and pawing the pavement. Since then, the passion, or rather fashion, has waned, but latterly there has been a sort of revival of the tasse. We are not sure that it would not be well for some arbiter of fashion to introduce the Tartar custom of courting in the saddle. Make it compulsory in a marriageable young lady to mount a fleet steed, and challenge her lovers to pursue her—the winner of the race to be the bridegroom—a lady's stake with beauty for the guerdon—the bridle to precede the bridal, and the halter to go before the altar. Then should we have fine times—the age of the Centaurs and the Amazons would be reproduced—and Lexington's time would be beaten by some nameless fifty.

GRAPES AND WINES.—It is stated in one of our exchanges that during the present year, there will probably be raised a grape crop sufficient to make 600,000 gallons of Catawba wine. According to a paper now before us, if the product stated above were doubled every year for five years to come, the market for Catawba wine would not be overstocked. Until there shall be five millions of acres planted in vines, the price of wine cannot be reduced to a minimum in the United States.

A LIBEL.—"Was it not drunkenness that brought you into this disgraceful position?" asked a judge of a prisoner, whose velvety eyes, and carbuncled nose warranted the interrogatory of his honor. "Indeed it was, your washup," replied the prisoner, "for I was fotched here by two pelissemen, what was both so drunk they couldn't tell a steeple from a sawhorse."

MAPLE SUGAR.—The Hampshire Gazette says that the crop of maple sugar in that section of the State will be below an average. The weather has been unfavorable, and the season is too far advanced now to expect a free flow of sap.

A JACK OF ALL TRADES.—There is a public scribe in Milan, who announces that "he settles accounts, explains the language of flowers, and sells maccaroni and roast chestnuts."

A QUICK TRIP.—The steamship United States, from Havana, was only three days and twenty-three hours from Havana to Sandy Hook.

COOL.—To take a man's hat with his name written in it, simply because you want to get his autograph.

FOGS.—"I hate fogs," said Jeremy Diddler; "in a fog, one is apt to run plump against his tailor."

WANTED.—Another detective police force to look after the present one.

## BALLOU'S PICTORIAL
## DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

[LATE GLEASON'S PICTORIAL]

For the present week embraces the following contents:

First, the opening chapters of a new and interesting novelette, entitled, "The King and the Cobbler," by AUSTIN C. BURDICK.

"The darkest before Day," a tale by ELLEN ALICE MORIARTY.

"An Unexpected Race," a story by SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Naples," a descriptive sketch by Rev. F. W. HOLLAND.

"Bereaved," a poem by Mrs. SOPHRONIA CURRIER.

"The Death of De Soto," stanzas by ANONO.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A characteristic engraving representing a pleasant finally gathering tokens on May Day.

Four representations of localities in Western Massachusetts; giving first, a view of the Western Railroad Depot at Pittsfield, Mass., second, a view of Pittsfield, third, a representation of Peak Mountain, on Deerfield River, Hawley, and fourth, a view of Charlemont, Upper Village, Massachusetts.

A large picture, representing the meeting of Milton, the bard of Paradise Lost, and Galileo, the Italian astronomer.

Portrait of John G. Saxe, the well-known comic poet.

View of Lexington, Kentucky.

Representation of the Mountain of Me Take in Japan.

View of the City of Simonoseki, Japan.

Temple of Nishigawasaki, at Misako, Japan.

View of the Public Landing at Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Home of Florence Nightingale, the English lady, who has immortalized herself by her labors of sympathy and benevolence, among the soldiers of the Crimea.

*,* The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

## Foreign Items.

The Queen of Spain has presented the Pope with six beautiful Andalusian horses.

The passage from Dover to Calais has been made by some of the new steamers in one hour and twenty minutes.

England imported 30,543,533 pounds of tobacco in 1854, from which she received a revenue of £4,643,478.

The two sons of the poet Burns have been promoted, William Nichol to a Colonelcy, and James Glencairn to a Lieut. Colonelcy.

Ciesinger, the French sculptor, has lost the sight of one eye—at his work a chip of stone flew into it, and destroyed it.

The quantity of malt made in the United Kingdom, in the year 1854, and charged with duty, amounted to 36,819,554 bushels, against 42,009,752 bushels made in 1853.

There has been a terrible inundation in Holland. The Rhine has overflowed its banks, and destroyed many houses, villages, and much farm stock and human life.

The reports of the earthquake at Brousa were much exaggerated. Only about 200 to 300 persons were killed. The mosques, and numbers of houses, suffered severely.

In the event of the Cent Gardes quitting Paris, the cuirasses which they now wear will be exchanged for others made of aliminium, the metal lately discovered.

The Hulsean prize, Cambridge, England, for the best essay upon the influence of Christianity on International Law, has been awarded to Mr. C. M. Kennedy, and is to be published.

Martin Van Buren, Jr., died at Paris, on Tuesday, the 10th ult. He had long been wasting away from consumption, but his death was, nevertheless, very sudden, having taken place instantaneously, while he was seated at dinner.

## Dewdrops of Wisdom.

A felicity that costs pain, gives trouble content.

The greatest truths are the simplest, so are the greatest men.

God hears the heart without words—but he never hears words without the heart.

The worst of an imaginary danger is, that it often leads us to overlook a real one.

A man is half known when you see him; when you hear him speak you know him all out.

Remember, that the human constitution is one that cannot be amended by a two-thirds vote.

There are few defects in our nature so glaring as not to be veiled by politeness and good-breeding.

In all our calamities and afflictions, it may serve as a comfort to know that he who loses anything and gets wisdom by it, gains by the loss.

Men of a fervid imagination, having a great command of language, and also enthusiasm of character, almost invariably become superior teachers.

Can anything be justly deemed little, which is pregnant with eternal consequences? Are there any little things in a sound system of spiritual morality?

A writer has compared worldly friendships to our shadow, and a better comparison was never made, for while we walk in the sunshine it sticks to us, but the moment we enter the shade it departs.

Success in teaching is more dependent upon the capabilities of the master for teaching, than upon his technical acquirements. Teaching power is not always associated with superior talents or acquirement.

## Joker's Budget.

Why is a grapevine like a recruit? Because it is tiested and trained to shoot.

A wag observes that he looks under the marriage head for the news of the "weak."

Why is the British army like a looking-glass? Because it cannot be beaten without being destroyed.

Why is a pretty young woman like corn in a time of scarcity? Because she ought to be husbanded.

Women are said generally to wear their shawls gracefully, and men to manage the same garment dis-gracefully.

Mrs. Partington says there must be some sort of kin between poets and pulicts, for they are always chanting their lays.

"Boy, what will you take to tell a lie for me?" asked a mate, of one of the cabin boys. "Not all the gold in California, sir," was the prompt answer of the lad.

It is reported of a certain ostentatious lawyer, that he is never without at least a dozen cases on hand. It has been ascertained, however, that they consist of a lot of old book cases.

The latest case of absence of mind, is recorded of a lady about to "whip up" some eggs for sponge cake, who whipped the baby, and sung Watts's cradle hymn to the eggs.

Since it has become the fashion for men to confess their past errors very frequently in books, it is boldly asserted that there is no difference between an autobiography and a naughty biography.

Some crusty, rusty, fusty, lusty, musty, dusty, gusty curmudgeon of a man, gave the following toast at a celebration. "Our fire engines—May they be like our old maids—ever ready, but never wanted."

## Quill and Scissors.

Hon. Josiah Quincy, jr., in a recent lecture on Mormonism, stated that Joseph Smith, the founder of the sect, was born of parents who removed from the county of Essex, Mass., to Vermont, about the time of his birth. When in Essex county they lived in Middleton or Topsfield, within five miles of the spot where Salem witchcraft sprung up. Spiritual rappings still extensively pervade the same neighborhood.

Samuel Bird has raised on a lot of one acre and a quarter, at Great Salt Lake city, without irrigation, the following amount of produce: thirty-two bushels of wheat, twelve of corn, eighty of potatoes, twelve of onions, six of parsnips, six of carrots and one of beans, seven hundred cabbages, besides cucumbers, peas, squashes and melons. The ground was simply plowed.

When the king of Prussia received the telegraphic news of the death of his brother in law, he immediately sent back the following words from the Apocalypse, addressed to his sister, the empress: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." This is probably the first time the telegraph has been used—in Russia, at least—to convey Scripture.

The New York Tribune has received a six dollar bill of Maryland currency of the year 1770, which it thus describes: It is a venerable specimen of typography and wood engraving, and in its uncouth coarseness contrasts strangely with the neat and elegant paper currency of the present day. The endorsement informs us, that "to counterfeit is death."

If you wish to ascertain the distance of a thunder storm, place the finger on the pulse, and the moment the flash of lightning is seen, commence counting the beats. If you feel six pulsations before you hear the thunder, the storm is one mile away; if twelve pulsations, it is two miles, and so on.

Among the rumored marriages cited in Paris, are those of M. Ponsard, the dramatic poet, with Mdlle. Rachel, the great tragic actress, and also, that of her brother, M. Raphael Felix, with the young and pretty Judith Ferreyra, actress at the Gymnase.

In Chicago the jails are made with accommodations for committing suicide. Two have succeeded within a year, and one tried it a few days ago, but his handkerchief parted and let him down. The bars, however, are left yet, and there is talk of providing hooks.

A cast iron bridge at Bristol, England, of one arch, 160 feet over, was carried away by a screw propeller hitting the side pier. There were persons and carts on it. Some swam ashore, but a woman and child, and several others, were lost.

Mr. Isaac Snow, one of the last revolutionary soldiers in this country, died at Orleans, recently, aged 97 years 6 months and 4 days. He was in the army at Cambridge under General Washington, and was one of the party that occupied Dorchester Heights.

The state agricultural society of Maine has been organized at Augusta, under the act of the late legislature, by the choice of Samuel Butman, of Dixmont, for president, E. Holmes, secretary, and William Caldwell, treasurer.

It is said to be currently believed in Holland, that the "late" monarch, William the second, only pretended to die, to get rid of the cares of royalty, and is now aiding his nephew, the czar, in the Crimea, under the assumed name of Menschikoff!

T. B. Hamilton, of New York city, has been holden to bail at Albany, for cowhiding J. J. Chambers, the governor's private secretary. It is said he had previously pulled Mr. Chambers's nose.

Selim Pasha, the commander of the Egyptians at the combat of Eupatoria, on which occasion he was killed, was the Mameluke who escaped from the massacre at Cairo, by jumping his horse over a parapet.

One of the most appropriate names we know of, is that of Mr. Toosey, who performs most of the marriage ceremonies in Appleton, Wisconsin.

It is said that every witness upon the famous trial, some years ago, of the mutineers on board the U. S. brig Somers, has since died a violent death.

Mexico contains 85 cities, 193 towns or large villages, 4709 villages, 119 missions, etc., 170 haciendas, and 6992 farms, etc. Population 7,853,395.

Robbing hen-roosts has got to be a very common occurrence in Roxbury.

Fruit has been extensively cut off by the frosts in upper Georgia.

In California, washerwomen get $3 per dozen, and grow rich.

## Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Welcome W. Aldrich to Miss Elisabeth Griffin.

By Rev. Mr. Chiley, Mr. John A. Allen to Miss Joanna Kann.

By Rev. Dr. Stow, Mr. James L. Miller to Miss Sarah M. Smyth.

By Rev. Mr. Howe, Mr. George E. Roundy to Miss Caroline A. Gilcrest.

By Rev. Mr. Sandall, Mr. Francis T. Willis to Miss Mary E. Mower.

By Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Charles Fiske to Miss Adaline W. Shaw.

By Rev. Mr. Cruft, Mr. Edward T. Talbot to Miss Abby Emerson.

By Rev. Mr. Schwarz, Mr. J. W. Kimerly to Miss Lina Tottermeister.

By Rev. Mr. Skinner, Mr. William H. Hanley to Mrs. Mary E. Hull.

At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Hills, Mr. Plummer H. Cheeley to Miss Fannie E. Flumstead.

At Roxbury, by Rev. Dr. Putnam, Mr. Calvin B. Fannes to Miss Catharine H. Colman.

At Cambridge, by Rev. Dr. Pryor, Mr. Joseph H. Bancroft to Miss Maria B. Faxon.

At West Newton, by Rev. Dr. Gilbert Mr. Edward M. Hutchinson to Miss Susan B. Felch.

At Newburyport, by Rev. Mr. Pike, Mr. Nathan C. Hose to Miss Amanda M. Storey.

At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Carlton, Mr. David I. Stickney to Miss Sarah A. Hopkins.

At Stanton, Ky., by Rev. J. Gwen, Mr. Henry M. Evans to Miss Caroline A. Mac Kaleb.

## Deaths.

In this city, Mrs. Caroline Blaney, 83. James La Roy Sunderland, 9 years. Mrs. Lydia C. Chamberlain, 39. Mrs. Jane Bishop, 45. Miss Abby N. Marland, 18. Mr. George Gilmore, 55. Mrs. Matilda Sweetser, 62. Helen L. Pierce, 12 years. Mrs. Hannah Stodder, 84. Mr. Samuel Harris, 66. William Henry Brown, 13 years.

At Roxbury, Mrs. Emeline W., wife of Mr. William D. Cook, 36.

At Charlestown, Miss Martha Ann, daughter of Col. J. Sanders, 21.

At East Cambridge, Mrs. Flora L., wife of Mr. John Tarbox, 35.

At Chelsea, Robert Warren, son of Mr. Robert K. Snow, 4 years.

At Malden, Mrs. Elizabeth Blaney, 84.

At Dorchester, Mr. John Tolman, 62.

At Medford, Mrs. Mary Abby Ann, wife of Mr. Mitchell Adel, 29.

At Lawrence, Mr. Rufus Ladd, printer, 21.

At Plymouth, Mr. Frazier Sampson, 58.

At Taunton, Mrs. Mary Sabin, 56.

At Salem, Mrs. Elizabeth Marsh, 90.

At Marblehead, Mr. William Hawkes, 86.

At Bangor, Mrs. Rachel Cheney, 82.

At Gloucester, Mrs. Susan, wife of Mr. Alexander Hatch-ings, 40.

At Newburyport, Mr. Nehemiah Sargent, 57. Mary F. Adams, 23. Mrs. Sarah Perkins, 62.

At Peterborough, N. H., Mr. William Grey, 74.

At Concord, N. H., Mr. Richard Herbert, 94.

At New York, Mr. Isaac Newton, 62.

At Sacramento, Mr. Wm. J. Hicks, 21.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## MEMORY OF THE PAST.

BY HARRY SMITH.

How strange the memory of the past
Comes thrilling through the mind,
Of hopes that were too bright to last,
How scattered like the wind!

How sweetly sad do years by-gone,
Echo through the pensive soul;
As charms the lyre when touched by one,
Who can its melodies control.

'Tis thus we turn to childhood's hour,
Of love, hope, innocence and joy;
Ere life's dark clouds around us lower,
And taint our minds with their alloy.

In memory e'en, we linger still,
Amid our childhood's fairy scenes;
Beside some gently purling rill,
Or meadows decked in gayest sheen.

Those days to us are fresh and fair,
Yet they and all their hopes are fled;
Our childhood's joy has changed to care,
And friends we loved are cold or dead.

How many a heart, which then was gay,
Is shrouded now in deepest gloom;
And others, ere life's short noonday,
Were called to fill an early tomb.

Forchance the future seems more fair
Than any by-gone years have been;
Yet each will bring a load of care,
And darker days oft intervene.

But let us strive and thoughts to shun,
And to improve the present hour;
A glorious end may thus be won,
And Satan robbed of all his power.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE BRAVO.

FOUNDED ON FACTS IN VENETIAN HISTORY.

BY ALICE MAY.

It was a lovely evening in May. The light of the setting sun fell clear and bright on the broad canals and quiet lakes of Venice. A slight breeze just stirred the surface of the water, and from the edge of every ripple the reflected rays sparkled like diamonds, encircling in a flood of light the lofty palace of marble which rose as from the very bosom of the waters. The day had been fitful and showery, but the sun had just burst forth and was setting in all his splendor, while the ragged edges of the clouds hung above the resplendent rays, and the inky blackness of the eastern sky only formed a better contrast to the brilliant rainbow that now spanned the heavens. At the entrance of one of the principal streets a slight gondola might be seen slowly drifting over the water. It contained two men, but they were far too deeply engaged in their conversation to pay much attention to the beauty of the scene, or to the course which they were pursuing. The elder was a short thickset man, with a dark complexion, a low forehead overhung with curling black hair, and features every one of which bore the stamp of a villain and of a successful villain. His companion was tall and slight, but his lithe and well-formed frame gave promise of great strength should he ever be roused to put is forth. The elder was now speaking:

"Yes, Abellino, the laws of our land are imperative that no one can be admitted to full membership till he has shed blood. In one way or another your name has been joined with almost every audacious deed committed by us for some months past, but you well know you have taken no active part in any of them. To-night I call upon you for a decisive proof of your loyalty to me. You know the relentless cruelty with which the doge has pursued us, and the many insults he has heaped on us. This is the hour which his niece, whom he has adopted, the beautiful Idnella, is wont to pass in the palace gardens. The entrance is known to you, and when once you have gained access to her, your way is plain."

"But why punish her for her uncle's sins?" said Abellino.

"It will be the direst vengeance on him," replied the other, passionately; "but no more of this," he added, after a moment's pause; "it is your province to obey unquestioningly."

Abellino merely bent his head in answer, and for a moment the gondola glided on in silence, when he resumed:

"But should the Lady Idnella be surrounded by her guards?"

"The greater the danger, the greater the bravery shown in overcoming it," replied his companion; "but, lest the risk be too great, I will myself accompany you and be at hand to assist you."

And he added in a low tone to himself, "I shall then be sure you do not play me false, my fellow."

They now stopped, and fastening their gondola, passed through a low door which closed behind them. But before we follow them farther, we must inform our readers who the individuals were.

The elder, Matteo Fezzano, or Mattano, as he was usually called by his companions, was the leader of a band of robbers that had long infested Venice, and eluded the most careful search of the police. The most terrible crimes were committed even in the face of day, but in no case could the slightest clue be obtained to the perpetrators of the outrage. Abellino was the youngest of the band, and the latest accession to their number. They were unable even to imagine how he had gained information of their retreat, nor would he disclose the secret to them. They had imagined themselves secure from all intrusion, but one night as they sat engaged in earnest conversation on some of their future enterprises, this young man suddenly entered and asked admission to their band. A stormy debate ensued. The boldness of the youth in venturing alone among them, and his noble bearing, captivated the fancy of some of the robbers, but others insisted that no strangers could be admitted, and that instant death was the only fitting penalty for the discoverer of their retreat. After a long contest, it was decided, though by only a single vote, that the life of Abellino, for by that name he announced himself, should be spared, and his request should be granted. But Matteo had never been his friend. He thought he saw in the expression of the young man's face, a will which might shake his authority, should their views clash, and moreover he feared his loyalty to their cause. But no rupture had as yet occurred, and they were now engaged together in the enterprise where we have just left them.

After passing through the door, Abellino hastily assumed the disguise of an old man, and the two pursued their way to the palace gardens through passages well known to these men, to whom every nook and corner of the city was familiar. The lovely Idnella was sitting in a low garden chair. Her guitar lay beside her hat—it was untouched, and she was looking dreamily around as if her thoughts were far away from the scene before her. The golden hair fell in ringlets over her shoulders, and surrounded by the beautiful flowers and foliage, she formed a picture of unsurpassed loveliness.

"Let a whistle be the signal in case you should need my assistance," said Mattano, while he ensconced himself in a secure hiding-place among the shrubbery.

Abellino went forward with the attitude and manner of a beggar. Idnella started up as steps approached, and exclaimed in surprise, not unmingled with fear:

"How came you here? No one is permitted entrance at this hour to these gardens. Speak, old man! What do you wish? Is it alms?"

By this time Abellino stood close at her side, and bending down, he said, in a low, meaning whisper:

"What if life be sought, lady, the life of the young and beautiful, and not merely gold?"

"What say you?" gasped Idnella, almost paralyzed with terror. "Old man, who are you?"

"No old man," said Abellino, throwing off his long beard, and his mendicant's dress, but still retaining his mask, "for I am Abellino."

Idnella shrieked, and Matteo, mistaking this for the signal, started forward. Abellino stood with his drawn dagger uplifted, and exclaimed:

"Your life, lady Idnella, I was bid to seek, but can I even threaten a life without which the world would have no brightness to me?" and turning suddenly, he plunged his weapon in Matteo's breast, and disappeared:

All was terror and confusion in the ducal palace that night. The government of the doge was by no means firmly established. His power was constantly set at naught, and his authority insulted by the deeds of these insolent robbers, and now his own child had been insulted, her very life threatened within the precincts of his own palace. They had dared to commit murder in her very presence, and to stain his grounds with blood. No clue to their discovery could be found, and, morover, very evident signs presented themselves that a conspiracy was now forming to overthrow his power entirely, and give his place to another. The doge well knew that should these shrewd and skilful villains unite with the disaffected among the nobles, enough rebels might be found to accomplish this purpose. But who were these audacious robbers? This mysterious Abellino, whose name for the past six months had been the watchword at every crime?

The doge had questioned Idnella, but overcome by fear she had closed her eyes, and could give no description of his appearance after he threw off his disguise, and his features were closely concealed by his mask.

While the doge thus sat buried in reflection, a page entered, and announced that Paoli, one of the council, was without, and asked audience.

"Let him enter," said the doge, and a cordial greeting was exchanged between the two.

"I came," said Paoli, after a few moments' conversation, "to ask you to receive at court a young friend of mine, who has just arrived, Flodoardo Monchenigi. He is of the ancient Monchenigi family, and his father married my only sister. He was my best friend, and for his sake the young man would be dear to me even if he were not allied to me by the near tie of blood."

"He shall be welcome," said the doge; "but where has he been for these many years?"

"After the quarrels between the Monchenigi and the Corsini, which resulted in his father's death, he was sent to Florence to be educated. Of late he has passed some time in travelling, and has been nobly serving against the infidel Turks in the defence of Malta. He left the island some time since, and as I have never been informed of his arrival, I have feared that he had perished at sea; but yesterday he suddenly appeared. He is now purposing, should your highness give consent, to assume his title and take possession of his estates."

"Will he be faithful to our cause?" said the doge, "or is there danger that he may lean to the side of the disaffected?"

"I will answer for him," rejoined Paoli; "and to-morrow morning we will seek audience of you."

The next morning all Venice rang with the news that the robbers were at last discovered. Groups of eager citizens stood on the broad stairs, or were gazing in the squares fronting the churches, all discussing the events of the night, and seeking further information. The gondoliers plied their oars hastily, engaged in transporting the numerous passengers. A Jew, who had obtained access to some of the soldiery, soon spread the news that the information had been given by Flodoardo Monchenigi, and that he himself had headed the detachment employed in the capture.

Much question ensued who this young man was, that had rendered such signal service, and when the people learned that he belonged to the old family of the Monchenigi, so popular in Venice, their enthusiasm knew no bounds. But one of the band had escaped—yet some could not resist a feeling of terror on hearing that this was the dreaded Abellino who had at the time been absent.

The doge received Paoli and Flodoardo with the utmost joy, overwhelming the latter with expressions of his gratitude.

"To you, alone, we owe this noble deed," said he, "and thus is Venice delivered. Though one remained, yet he can do nothing unassisted, and you have taken away the only stain upon my government."

"I hope," said Paoli, "that my fears of Abellino may prove unfounded, but on the Church of St. Marks itself, is now placed a declaration signed by Abellino, to the intent that do what we may, destroy the band if we choose, or persecute him by every means in our power, he will be ever ready to defy us."

"Is it so?" said the doge, thoughtfully; but turning to Flodoardo, "thanks are but poor reward for such a service as this, and I have no fit favor to grant for it, but ask anything in my power and it shall be instantly yours."

Flodoardo remained silent, and a deep blush suffused his usually pale cheeks.

"Why do you hesitate?" continued the doge. "I can refuse you nothing."

"May I first crave your permission to weary you with a tale of my past life?" began Flodoardo, with some embarrassment.

"With pleasure," said the doge; "but what has that to do with your reward?"

"You shall see," said Flodoardo. "The past few years of my life have been spent in fighting against the infidel Turks, under a commander whom I revered and loved. His daughter I had often seen in her father's palace, and I secretly adored her. One day we had a severe contest. Our commander was severely, we feared, even mortally wounded; our troops had been defeated, and a large portion of the town, with many prisoners, had been seized by the Turks. Toward evening I stood with several of my companions near a retired part of the shore, when a group of veiled figures, about twenty in number passed us, guarded by three Turkish soldiers. While I was idly gazing on them, imagining it the harem of some pacha of wealth, one of the girls turned towards us and seeing the cross we bore, exclaimed, wildly—'Save me! save me!' The pure Italian at once betrayed to me the truth that these were Christian captives on their way to the slave market at Constantinople. I shouted to my companions, 'to the rescue,' and in a moment we were engaged hand to hand with the Turkish guard. The struggle was fierce, for the galley was moored close at hand, and they knew that could they reach it, they were safe—but our numbers were vastly superior, and we were soon masters of the field. While my companions hurried the terrified girls, who as yet could hardly realize their deliverance, to a place of safety, I bore one fainting form to a neighboring spring. As I threw back her veil to bathe her forehead, I recognized the beautiful features of my commander's daughter. When she awoke to consciousness I could no longer restrain my passion, and I poured forth my love in burning words. She turned from me in apparent terror, and entreated me to carry her to her parents. I obeyed in silence, for how could I, an unknown soldier of fortune, dare lift my eyes to her. But now for her sake I have done Venice this service, and have added glory and renown to my name, and may I ask your permission to pay my court to the Lady Idnella, your adopted daughter, for it is she of whom I have been speaking?"

The doge had suspected this from the beginning of the story, but as Flodoardo pronounced her name, he said, with forced composure:

"This must not be. This is the only boon I cannot grant, for my daughter must be united with a royal house. Think of some other way in which I may requite your services, but never mention this again."

Flodoardo had sunk on one knee as he proffered his request, but he now rose proudly, saying:

"The Lady Idnella knew me only as a base-born soldier when she spurned me, but now I come with my proper rank, and my house is as noble as your own. But I will yet do deeds to win her."

"You are hopeful," said the doge, "but it is useless. She must be the bride of the Florentine. Go now, but think of some other reward."

Flodoardo bowed and passed out, but no sooner was he alone, than his fierce passion broke forth uncontrolled.

"Have I toiled and struggled all in vain? Have I perilled my life for her, and is she never to be mine?"

He was silent for a moment, then exclaimed:

"Would I commit a crime, it could not aid me, for she would spurn me from her with scorn and loathing for it; but noble deeds shall yet win her."

For awhile all was quiet in Venice. Abellino was unheard of, and the public peace was preserved. Flodoardo appeared at court but seldom, and never again did he mention his suit to any one. The Florentine marriage went on but slowly. The doge had commissioned Monetta, the former governess of his niece, who now held the position of companion, to sound her views of the alliance, but Idnella gave only evasive answers, declaring her unwillingness to leave her uncle, and requesting permission to retire into a convent, rather than marry.

The doge was perplexed. He had given a solemn promise to his brother never to force Idnella to marry against her consent, but this reluctance seemed to him inexplicable. He at length suspected a previous attachment, and tried to extort some confession himself from Idnella, but she still persisted in her refusal to give any reason for her rejection of the match, and asked only to be left unwearied by this persecution. But while the doge was thus engaged darker storms were closing around him. The conspiracy which he had feared for some time was just on the eve of breaking forth. A few violent men were dissatisfied with the mild and just sway of the doge, which afforded no room for the enjoyment of their lusts and vices, and longed for greater license. It is moreover the very nature even of the best of despotisms to raise enemies, and even then some desired to establish a freer form of government. These had united, and a meeting was to be held at the house of Pandolfo di Guido, one of the disaffected nobles, on the evening of the very day when the doge had held this interview with Idnella. They came from all ranks in the city, and the room was soon filled.

"We wait only for Angelo Ursini to decide on measures for an instant attack," said one of the brothers Corsini, who were foremost in the conversation.

"We must first gain over the captains of the soldiers," said Pandolfo, "and make ourselves master of the armory."

"But how can this be done?" said one, "when we have such vigilant officers as Cardenio and Paoli? The police would be on our track."

"There is Angelo," said Pandolfo, and all paused for a moment, when a low whistle was heard and the door opened, but instead of Angelo, a tall, slight figure presented itself masked, as were all the conspirators.

"Who are you?" exclaimed Beppo Corsini, in surprise.

"I am Abellino," was the reply, accompanied by a scornful laugh.

"Abellino!" said Pandolfo, "Abellino! Are we discovered, or are you the spirit of evil himself, to penetrate hither without a guide."

"The reward offered for your head should make you beware of such boldness," said one of the conspirators, with a menacing gesture.

"Not so fast," said Abellino, while a smile of exultation played over his features. "I did not venture into the lion's den, without being prepared to resist his claws. I have left information behind me that would lay every one of your heads on the scaffold, should a hair of my head be injured. Now do your pleasure."

The conspirators were terrified. Abellino knew too much to be disregarded. It was dangerous to kill him. To receive him was their only resource. Abellino watched the dispute with a meaning smile, which was concealed under his mask, but at length said calmly:

"You must take me. I am at your service. Lay any command upon me and I will execute it."

"Then," said Pandolfo, with sudden boldness, "we desire the immediate death of the Councillor Paoli, and to-morrow night you must bring us his signet ring as an assurance that the deed is done."

"But," said Abellino, "what pledge will you give me of your faith to me?"

"A written promise to pay you five hundred florins when you place Paoli's ring in my hands, and as a token by which to demand payment, here is my own signet."

Abellino bowed, took the ring and disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. The next morning the doge was early informed that messengers in great haste were in waiting for him.

"My lord," said one, as soon as they were admitted, "we come to demand instant action from you. Last night the chamber of our master Paoli was forced open, he himself dragged away by violence, and no trace of him can now be discovered. We are uncertain of his fate. The canals near the house have been dragged, but no clue has as yet been found. His nephew, Flodoardo, has himself headed one party in the search. The clothes of the couch are torn, as if he had struggled violently, and down the staircase and through the hall are marks of force, but within the house no one of us heard a sound. On the chamber wall is written in large, bold characters—'I am Abellino.'"

"Ha," said the doge, "does that villain still brave our power? Send out faithful soldiers and officers, assisted by the most skilful among the police. Let them examine every corner of the city. This rascal must be found."

The men retired, and then did the doge venture to give free vent to his feelings.

"My faithful Paoli! my almost only friend! Art thou, too, gone? I have tried to govern Venice mildly and justly, but these assassins can commit any crime and I am powerless against them. And soon I shall be sacrificed to a base conspiracy. Well," he exclaimed, after a moment's pause, "I will at least do my duty now."

That night the conspirators met again and were exulting on the supposed success of their plan, when Abellino entered as quietly as before, and laid Paoli's ring on the table. Pandolfo seized it with a gesture of fierce hatred, and seemed to glut his malice with the very sight of it.

"What more do you wish from me?" said Abellino.

"The death of the other, of Cardenio."

"But when do you proceed to open rebellion?"

"Three days hence, at the birthday fete of the Lady Idnella. We can carry weapons, while the doge and his unsuspecting friends will be unarmed. We can easily make ourselves masters of his person and of the palace. Enough of our party will be there to ensure success, and many will join us when they see the power in our hands."

"The soldiery are to be gained over," said one of the Corsini, "and then our success is sure."

Abellino bowed and again disappeared, but this time he took his stand behind some of the rich tapestry that adorned the room.

"I like not this man," said Angelo Ursini, who was now present; "we are far too deeply in his power."

"Yes," said one of the Corsini, "but this course was inevitable. We must receive him as a friend, or he would have been a most bitter enemy. But now to our plans."

"Fiotto, the chief baker," said Angelo, "has promised us five hundred florins down, and should the struggle be protracted, he will engage to furnish provisions for our soldiery for three days."

"And Giacco di Lampi," said one of the Corsini, "has stored his house with weapons with which, if worst comes to worst, we can arm the mob."

"Yes," said Pandolfo, "they will not dare desert us now, for here is their written promise to this effect, and should we give these to the doge, their heads would be on the scaffold as soon as our own;" and so saying he flung the letters on the table.

"Then," said Angelo, "with you for our doge and the Lady Idnella for your bride, we may hope for happier days in Venice."

Pandolfo smiled, but the Corsini and some others who had ambitious views of their own to gratify, looked ill pleased, and the party separated without further words. As the door closed behind the last one, Abellino sprang forward and secured the papers which Pandolfo had carelessly left on the table.

"Ha," he exclaimed, "Giacco di Lampi and Fiotto are well in my power now. A detachment of police shall secure their houses, and with these in my hands, their heads will not be worth much."

The doge sat the next morning absorbed in mournful thoughts. Cardenio, too, had disappeared, and in the same mysterious manner. There was evidently some plan for the destruction of his faithful adherents. As he was revolving all the circumstances and endeavoring to find some clue to the actors in this scene, a page entered and announced Flodoardo Monchenigi.

"Let him enter," said the doge; and a ray of hope flashed across him that the young man would bring him assistance, or at least good counsel.

"Welcome," he exclaimed, rising cordially to greet him; "you have come just when I need you most. I only hope you have some aid for me."

"I come with news of troubles and difficulties," said Flodoardo, calmly, "but I have at the same time a plan of escape from them. A man has just placed in my hands information of the existence of a most dangerous conspiracy, which is just ready to disclose itself to the ruin of your power. Pandolfo di Guido, Angelo Ursini, the two Corsini, and several other nobles are engaged in it, and they hope to be supported by an extensive rising among the people."

"But when will they begin rebellion, and what steps shall I now take to counteract their plans? Shall I instantly order the arrest of the chief conspirators? But on what proof can I do this?"

"The proofs I hold in my own hands and will bring them forward at the due time. But do not be too hasty. The plans of the conspirators are now well matured. Since Paoli and Cardenio have been removed, they have now, as they imagine, nothing more to fear from their care and vigilance. On the morrow they will try to gain over the soldiery, and the next day at your niece's festival, you are to be arrested with all the chief nobility not implicated with them. Pandolfo is to have your place, and the other offices will be divided among his party."

"What, here in my own palace?" gasped the duke, "on my child's birthday? I knew of this conspiracy, or at least suspected it, but I never imagined such audacity."

"Let us be brave, my lord, and we shall foil them yet," went on Flodoardo. "I myself will visit the captain of the guard on duty at the palace. I know him well, and believe him a loyal subject of your highness, but even if he were not, he is bound to me by many favors. He will assume an appearance of consent when Pandolfo sounds him, and will thus lead him on to a full betrayal of his plans. The conspirators imagining themselves secure of him, will seek no further aid, knowing that the soldiers will follow their commander. But pardon me, my lord, perhaps I am presumptuous, and am interfering with your better counsel."

"Go on, go on!" said the doge, "my friend—but no, you are more than a friend, for friends render mutual benefit, but you return good for evil. Give what assistance you can to an almost despairing man."

"Then, my lord, shall we not let them go on laying new snares for themselves till the fete day, when we can be ready with all our strength to thwart them? Let orders be given to the guards to disarm every man who enters the palace that day. Our friends will need none, for we are secure of the soldiers, while the conspirators will begin their game, imagining the soldiery are on their side, and then they will fall an easy prey to us."

"Good," said the doge. "Do you hasten to your friend, I will give orders for the security of the palace. But," he added to himself, as Flodoardo left the room, "I am only incurring new obligations to this young man. Heaven grant he may not again demand my niece's hand. This very night must the treaty for the Florentine alliance be concluded, lest any false hopes be raised. Duke Lorenzo's ambassador is even now waiting an answer in the city, and the betrothal can be announced on Idnella's birthday."

The next day passed off quietly, but the doge could not even rid himself of anxious apprehension. He had taken every precaution possible, but he still felt that some unexpected move of his opponents might place him in their power. It needed but a straw to turn the balance. He had commanded the presence of Idnella in his cabinet, and endeavored to gain her consent to the Florentine marriage, but she decidedly rejected all these proposals, and desired that the envoy might be dismissed immediately, as there would be no hope of changing his resolution. So all hope of announcing her betrothal at the fete was resigned.

The next morning rose clear and bright, such a morning as only June gives us, and all the preparations for the festival were made. The great hall of the ducal palace was magnificently decorated, and strains of the finest music filled the air. A few of the guests were assembled early, but a slight feeling of constraint was visible among them, occasioned by the unusual demand of giving up their arms. None of the conspirators however, had as yet arrived. Soon Pandolfo entered, accompanied by the two Corsini, their faces showing very evident signs of alarm.

"I will soon discover," said the former, "if we are marked, or if the command be general," and turning, he addressed one of the nobles standing near him, saying:

"A somewhat strange request to disarm noble Venetians! Are we all left weaponless?"

"I believe so," replied the other. "I myself do not fully understand the reason of it, but the orders were that no weapons should intrude on the peaceful festival of the Lady Idnella, lest there be a risk of disturbance."

Pandolfo carried on a light conversation some moments, then returned to his companions, saying:

"All is right. Every one is unarmed. Ye," he added, in a lower tone, "I like not this fe. Though the soldiers will come to our aid as s as we give the signal, yet I fear me somethin wrong. Curses on that Abellino. Can he b betrayed us?"

"On me, my lord!" whispered a voice in ear. Pandolfo turned, and next the grim mask of Abellino. "Ha, ha, curses on me!"

Pandolfo stood rooted to the spot with ama ment, and before he could recover himself su ciently to speak, Abellino was lost among t crowd. He spoke of this encounter to no o but over himself and gradually over the ot conspirators, an indefinite sort of terror see to steal, palsying their thoughts, and doing m fatal injury to their cause, than any open atta of their enemies.

Meanwhile the fete went on right merr The loveliest daughters of Venice were pres and with the gay young cavaliers, presente most happy spectacle, all unconscious of storm about them. The doge was watching guests narrowly. Already the whispered c versation, unquiet gestures, and lowering he of some whom he knew to be among the di fected, had excited his anxiety for the app ance of Flodoardo. To him had been given entire conduct of this affair, but the doge not seen him this whole day, and though t passed on, he did not appear. "Can he too among the conspirators, and is this only a to disarm my adherents?" thought the d as many anxious thoughts passed through mind. "How could Flodoardo have obta this information, unless he were in the c dence of the conspirators?" He dispelled t suspicions as unworthy of the noble youth, again and again, as he thought of his stra deeds and his mysterious knowledge, they w return. The conspirators, meanwhile, gr bold by the long delay, were gathering re that part of the hall where the doge stood, Pandolfo was just on the point of giving the nal of attack and the rallying cry to the sold when the great doors opened with a loud cl and Flodoardo strode across the hall followe a band of guards. He made a low obeisan the doge, then said in a commanding tone:

"I come, my lord, with your permissio arrest here, in your presence, the arch tr Pandolfo di Guido and his accomplices."

The sudden silence that had fallen on the embled company at the entrance of the ar soldiery, made every word of this speech tinctly audible. Pandolfo, nerved by des sprang forward. He gave the signal to the diers, but it was disregarded, and he saw he betrayed. Nothing remained but to boldly the intended crime, and thus perhaps save self from destruction.

"Who is this?" he exclaimed, "that accuse a noble knight of Venice? It is a envious plot against me. Let him bring p my lord."

"Are proofs wanting?" said Flodoardo. you not stand ready but one short moment to give the signal that should doom to deat only the doge, but many of his guests?"

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"By his own confession, this man is a and a villain. Now he is hired by Flo against me."

"Is the signature not your own?" sa doge, "under which you pledge your ring curity for the payment of this money?"

"No," said Pandolfo, insolently, "and mand this rascal's instant arrest."

"In the name of Flodoardo Monchenig sent," cried Abellino, starting forward, tearing off his cloak and mask, "I am F do Monchenigi!"

The assembly had remained breathless excitement, during this scene, but now a stonishment broke from all. Even the doge self could not restrain his surprise. His new broke silence.

"Proofs enough you have had of these guilt already, monsieur, my lord, but, thing more be wanting, there is the cas

"Then," said Angelo, "with you for our doge and the Lady Idnella for your bride, we may hope for happier days in Venice."

Pandolfo smiled, but the Corsini and some others who had ambitious views of their own to gratify, looked ill pleased, and the party separated without farther words. As the door closed behind the last one, Abellino sprang forward and secured the papers which Pandolfo had carelessly left on the table.

"Ha," he exclaimed, "Giacco di Lampi and Flotto are well in my power now. A detachment of police shall secure their houses, and with these in my hands, their heads will not be worth much."

The doge sat the next morning absorbed in mournful thoughts. Cardenio, too, had disappeared, and in the same mysterious manner. There was evidently some plan for the destruction of his faithful adherents. As he was revolving all the circumstances and endeavoring to find some clue to the actors in this scene, a page entered and announced Flodoardo Monchenigi.

"Let him enter," said the doge; and a ray of hope flashed across him that the young man would bring him assistance, or at least good counsel.

"Welcome," he exclaimed, rising cordially to greet him; "you have come just when I need you most. I only hope you have some aid for me."

"I come with news of troubles and difficulties," said Flodoardo, coldly, "but I have at the same time a plan of escape from them. A man has just placed in my hands information of the existence of a most dangerous conspiracy, which is just ready to disclose itself to the ruin of your power. Pandolfo di Guido, Angelo Ursini, the two Corsini, and several other nobles are engaged in it, and they hope to be supported by an extensive rising among the people."

"But when will they begin rebellion, and what steps shall I now take to counteract their plans? Shall I instantly order the arrest of the chief conspirators? But on what proof can I do this?"

"The proofs I hold in my own hands and will bring them forward at the due time. But do not be too hasty. The plans of the conspirators are now well matured. Since Paoli and Cardenio have been removed, they have now, as they imagine, nothing more to fear from their care and vigilance. On the morrow they will try to gain over the soldiery, and the next day at your niece's festival, you are to be arrested wi.h all the chief nobility not implicated with them. Pandolfo is to have your place, and the other offices will be divided among his party."

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"Let us be brave, my lord, and we shall foil them yet," went on Flodoardo. "I myself will visit the captain of the guard on duty at the palace. I know him well, and believe him a loyal subject of your highness, but even if he were not, he is bound to me by many favors. He will assume an appearance of consent when Pandolfo sounds him, and will thus lead him on to a full betrayal of his plans. The conspirators imagining themselves secure of him, will seek no further aid, knowing that the soldiers will follow their commander. But pardon me, my lord, perhaps I am presumptuous, and am interfering with your better counsel."

"Go on, go on!" said the doge, "my friend—but no, you are more than a friend, for friends render mutual benefit, but you return good for evil. Give what assistance you can to an almost despairing man."

"Then, my lord, shall we not let them go on laying new snares for themselves till the fete day, when we can be ready with all our strength to thwart them? Let orders be given to the guards to disarm every man who enters the palace that day. Our friends will need none, for we are secure of the soldiers, while the conspirators will begin their game, imagining the soldiery are on their side, and then they will fall an easy prey to us."

"Good," said the doge. "Do you hasten to your friend, I will give orders for the security of the palace. But," he added to himself, as Flodoardo left the room, "I am only incurring new obligations to this young man. Heaven grant he may not again demand my niece's hand. This very night must the treaty for the Florentine alliance be concluded, lest any false hopes be raised. Duke Lorenzo's ambassador is even now waiting an answer in the city, and the betrothal can be announced on Idnella's birthday."

The next day passed off quietly, but the doge could not even rid himself of anxious apprehension. He had taken every precaution possible, but he still felt that some unexpected move of his opponents might place him in their power. It needed but a straw to turn the balance. He had commanded the presence of Idnella in his cabinet, and endeavored to gain her consent to the Florentine marriage, but she decidedly rejected all these proposals, and desired that the envoy might be dismissed immediately, as there would be no hope of changing his resolution. So all hope of announcing her betrothal at the fete was resigned.

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"I will soon discover," said the former, "if we are marked, or if the command be general," and turning, he addressed one of the nobles standing near him, saying:

"A somewhat strange request to disarm noble Venetians! Are we all left weaponless?"

"I believe so," replied the other. "I myself do not fully understand the reason of it, but the orders were that no weapons should intrude on the peaceful festival of the Lady Idnella, lest there be a risk of disturbance."

Pandolfo carried on a light conversation for some moments, then returned to his companions, saying:

"All is right. Every one is unarmed. Yet," he added, in a lower tone, "I like not this folly. Though the soldiers will come to our aid as soon as we give the signal, yet I fear me something is wrong. Curses on that Abellino. Can he have betrayed us?"

"On me, my lord?" whispered a voice in his ear. Pandolfo turned, and met the grinning mask of Abellino. "Ha, ha, curses on me!"

Pandolfo stood rooted to the spot with amazement, and before he could recover himself sufficiently to speak, Abellino was lost among the crowd. He spoke of this encounter to no one, but over himself and gradually over the other conspirators, an indefinite sort of terror seemed to steal, palsying their thoughts, and doing more fatal injury to their cause, than any open attacks of their enemies.

Meanwhile the fete went on right merrily. The loveliest daughters of Venice were present, and with the gay young cavaliers, presented a most happy spectacle, all unconscious of the storm about them. The doge was watching the guests narrowly. Already the whispered conversation, unquiet gestures, and lowering brows of some whom he knew to be among the disaffected, had excited his anxiety for the appearance of Flodoardo. To him had been given the entire conduct of this affair, but the doge had not seen him this whole day, and though time passed on, he did not appear. "Can he too, be among the conspirators, and is this only a ruse to disarm my adherents?" thought the doge, as many anxious thoughts passed through his mind. "How could Flodoardo have obtained this information, unless he were in the confidence of the conspirators?" He repelled these suspicions as unworthy of the noble youth, but again and again, as he thought of his strange deeds and his mysterious knowledge, they would return. The conspirators, meanwhile, grown bold by the long delay, were gathering round that part of the hall where the doge stood, and Pandolfo was just on the point of giving the signal of attack and the rallying cry to the soldiers, when the great doors opened with a loud clang, and Flodoardo strode across the hall followed by a band of guards. He made a low obeisance to the doge, then said *in* a commanding tone:

"I come, my lord, with your permission, to arrest here, in your presence, the arch traitor Pandolfo di Gaido and his accomplices."

The sudden silence that had fallen on the assembled company at the entrance of the armed soldiery, made every word of this speech distinctly audible. Pandolfo, nerved by despair, sprang forward. He gave the signal to the soldiers, but it was disregarded, and he saw he was betrayed. Nothing remained but to boldly deny the intended crime, and thus perhaps save himself from destruction.

"Who is this?" he exclaimed, "that dares accuse a noble knight of Venice? It is a base, envious plot against me. Let him bring proofs, my lord."

"Are proofs wanting?" said Flodoardo. "Did you not stand ready but one short moment since, to give the signal that should doom to death not only the doge, but many of his guests?"

"The proofs?" said the audacious Pandolfo. "The proofs. You will not let this minion's mere word weigh against mine?"

"I am no minion," said Flodoardo, bravely; "but the son of a Venetian house whose nobility will more than vie with yours. Already have I done Venice noble service, and—"

"Yes," interrupted Pandolfo, "but how could you do that service? No honorable man could have had dealings with those robbers. My lord doge, he may even now be in league with Abellino, and believe me, he aims to destroy your power by first inducing you to destroy your best friends. Let him be arrested instantly."

The doge stood perplexed. His former suspicions of Flodoardo would return, but he could believe no real crime of this brave man. At length he said, hesitatingly:

"The proofs against Pandolfo, you must produce them."

"I crave leave of absence for a moment, and they shall be in your hands;" and before an answer could be given, Flodoardo had disappeared.

Before Pandolfo, enraged at this, could decide what course to pursue, a side door opened, and with a light step, a man sprang into the centre of the hall, exclaiming—"I am Abellino!"

A sudden cry of surprise and terror followed, and some of the soldiers started forward as if to seize him. He waved them back with a commanding gesture, and said:

"I come, my lord, sent by Flodoardo Monchenigi, to bear witness in his cause. In your hands," turning to the doge, "I place Pandolfo's signet ring, which your highness can return to him at your own pleasure. Also these two papers, containing each a promise to pay me five hundred florins, one for the murder of Paoli, the other for that of Cardenio. Here also are letters from their accomplices, promising arms and other aid."

Pandolfo turned pale as death, but he summoned courage still to reply:

"By his own confession, this man is a robber and a villain. Now he is hired by Flodoardo against me."

"Is this signature not your own?" said the doge, "under which you pledge your ring as security for the payment of this money?"

"No," said Pandolfo, insolently, "and I demand this rascal's instant arrest."

"In the name of Flodoardo Monchenigi, I am sent," cried Abellino, starting forward, "but—" tearing off his cloak and mask, "I am Flodoardo Monchenigi!"

The assembly had remained breathless with excitement, during this scene, but now a cry of amazement broke from all. Even the doge himself could not restrain his surprise. Flodoardo now broke silence.

"Proofs enough you have had of these men's guilt already, methinks, my lord, but, if anything more be wanting, there is the captain of the guard whom they tried to win over to their side, and to whom they made a full avowal of their plans."

Foiled at every turn, the conspirators saw nothing but destruction before them. "Mercy, mercy, my lord!" they cried, with cowardly fear. The doge made them no answer, but with a scornful gesture ordered them to be taken into custody by the guard.

"Ere we separate," said Flodoardo, "I crave permission to give some explanation of my conduct. First, I must prove my innocence of one crime of which I am accused. At a sign from him a side door was opened, and Paoli and Cardenio entered. Pandolfo covered his face with his hands. The doge sprang forward with a cry of joy.

"These faithful friends," said Flodoardo, "at my earnest request—and when I told them your safety might depend upon it, consented, though somewhat timorously, to a short confinement in my palace. They also entrusted to me their signets. You know the use I made of them. My course here has been plain enough for you to see that no stain rests upon me. How I became a member of the robber band, demands further notice. I dogged them and spied upon them till I found means to enter among them. Once there, I learned their secrets and plans, till I was able to deliver them up after slaying their leader. I have risked the chances of imminent death, and you know also, why I have done this; but a Monchenigi never urges a once rejected suit." He turned away, but the doge sprang forward and embraced him tenderly. "My more than son," he exclaimed, "you have conquered. She is yours to win if you can. Idnella can you refuse any boon to the deliverer of Venice?"

All this time Idnella stood pale and terrified, but protected by a knot of cavaliers who surrounded her. When Abellino threw off his disguise, her emotion overcame her, and she covered her face with her long veil. She now came forward and placed her hand in that of Flodoardo.

"Bless you, bless you, my children," said the doge, tenderly.

"Grant, my lord, one boon more, that no cloud may mar our happiness," said Flodoardo. "Let these unfortunate men be pardoned."

"And the robbers, too," said Idnella, "for Flodoardo has lived among them, and many were kind to him."

"Your boon is granted, Idnella," said the doge. "Their leader is gone, and on promise of giving up this way of life they shall be free. As for the conspirators, for your sake, Flodoardo, they shall be pardoned, if they will ask forgiveness here and swear loyalty for the future," which they did. A few weeks after a splendid wedding celebrated the union of Flodoardo and Lady Idnella.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE RUSTIC WEDDING.

BY MRS. CAROLINE A. SOULE.

On the south bank of the memorable and beautiful Mohawk, in full view of its placid waves and distinct hearing of its silvery song, was the pleasant and quiet little village of F——. The country around is quite uneven, rising sometimes gradually into green and bushy nolls, and again abruptly into fearful cliffs, and forming thus a picturesque and even charming landscape. A small, wild and reckless stream, with a thrilling Indian name, dashes noisily through the west boundary of this sunny spot, while through its lower part creeps the green and slimy Erie canal, with its thousand and one sluggish barks. A short distance from the river is a large tract of forest, which stretches away for miles in almost unbroken solitude, and for the most part as wild as when Hudson first sailed up the great river of the State. But few human habitations are found within its borders, yet here and there, however, some sturdy men have found their way, and clearing off a little spot, have built them a temporary home. They depend mainly for subsistence on timber, which they manufacture into boards and shingles, and take them to market on huge, rough-made sleds, drawn by a yoke of oxen, through a path cut out among the trees, just wide enough to afford the lumbering vehicle a passage.

The customs and manners of these dwellers in the woods are rude and uncultivated. Their children usually grow to man and womanhood without obtaining any other advantages of education than simply those which enable them to read and write and cypher very imperfectly, and with great labor. Of the world they know nothing, and seem to care but little; but they drive a bargain pretty closely, as a little money with them looks large, and as their wants are simple, a few dollars will make them rich and contented. They are a hardy, industrious, and honest race, with many sterling virtues and but few great vices. The most pernicious and prevalent of the latter is the custom of drinking whiskey, in which they frequently indulge to great excess; but it is done at home, and all the family participate in the peculiar fun to which it gives rise, and the noise and glee of the rustic revel.

In the village of which this forest forms a sombre boundary, there once resided a youthful clergyman, whom we shall call for present purposes, Dominie K. Gifted highly with intellectual and moral qualities, and possessing withal an easy and pleasing address, he had early become a great favorite, not only with his parishioners, but with the country people all about, and was thus frequently summoned away to attend to their spiritual wants. His deep, fervent, sympathising prayers, and his kind words of condolence, made his presence at funerals soon become an urgent necessity, and weeping eyes would watch his coming as though they knew his hand would softly wipe the tears away. And as the true heart is ever as glad at its neighbor's joy, as it is sad at its woes, so his could and did enter merrily into those brighter scenes of ministerial life—the clasping of hands and the covenanting of hearts, and from being the favorite Dominie of the funeral hour, he became soon, too, the loved and the longed-for one of the wedding festivities. Indeed, his fame in the marrying line was soon without a rival, and many a joyous, and many a funny scene, did it trace upon his memory.

It was a cold day, in the winter of 1840. Bleak winds swept furiously by, taking with them the snow that lay dry and loose upon the frozen ground, and piercing through the warmest of garments with a keen, shivering touch. The earth looked gloomy and desolate, while the whole visible heavens were overspread with dark clouds, which writhed and tossed with an angry velocity. Few persons were so hardy as to leave their glowing firesides to face the furious weather, and the few pedestrians that trod the little village, passed along with a hurried and business-like tread. Among them, about nine in the morning, was seen the youthful minister. Anxiety for his weekly news had driven him from his study, and he was walking briskly along, half-blinded by the dashing snow flakes, when he was suddenly accosted with the interrogation:

"I say, mister! can't ye tell me where Dominie K. lives, for I want to see him right off on business?"

"I suppose I am the man you are seeking," said Mr. K., looking a little curiously at the queer specimen of humanity who had stopped him so abruptly, and beholding a young man, apparently about twenty years of age, tall, very slim, but inclining forward with an awkward stoop, and with arms and legs which had quite too much length compared with their plumpness to impress the mind very seriously with the idea of the beauty of proportion in the human figure. He was habited in a homespun fabric, and the sleeves of his coat, and the legs of his pants, were as much too short as the limbs that occupied them were too long. His hat might have been, from its fashion, the wedding gear of his sire, his boots had trodden down the mud of many a plough-field, while his brown and brawny hands spoke eloquently of fallen trees and drifting logs. His face—but the sun only could have painted that, as its owner looked up so quickly into the minister's at his reply, and said:

"Be yees—be yees the Dominie? 'Cause if yees be, I want to speak with ye all alone—all alone, d'ye understand?"

"Ah, yes," said Mr. K., in his affable manner, "but it's a cold place here to talk. Walk with me to the post-office, and then I will show you to my study."

Pantingly the young man followed him, peering wonderingly into the letter-box as he saw his guide slip a folded paper in, and saying, wildly, when he saw him come out with a roll of newspapers in his hand:

"Du tell me now if that ar's the place where reading comes from?"

"Some of it," said the minister, and with hurried steps, he showed him to his home, and ushered him into his cozy study.

The young man's countenance changed as soon as he was seated. A ludicrous bashfulness usurped the intense anxiety that it had worn before, and instead of breaking his news at once, he sat for some moments looking into the fire and twirling his old hat, as a crazy gust of wind sometimes besets a withered leaf.

"Did I understand that you desired to see me, sir?" asked Mr. K, after a while.

"Y-e-s, sir, if yees be the Dominie."

"Well, I am he. What is your business?"

"Be we all alone?" and he looked sheepishly at the bedroom door, which was half open.

The minister rose and closed it.

"We are entirely alone, sir."

There were sundry hems, and hitches, and shuffles, and finally there bolted from his lips the words:

"Well, I come for yees to go and marry somebody to-night!"

"Indeed! and who is it?"

"Why, it's me and Betsey!" answered the poor fellow, with a desperate emphasis; "and we wants you and nobody else to marry us, 'cause you buried her sister's baby."

"O, it's only seven miles up here, you know."

"Seven miles! Why, I cannot possibly go that distance this blustering weather. You must invite some one else."

"But we can't, sir—indeed we can't; 'cause the old woman and the old man wants *you*, and so does Betsey and me, and we don't want nobody else, and you'll never lose anything by the job."

"Well, if you must have me," said Mr. K., looking ruefully at the bleak scene outside, "suppose you bring Betsey down here. And if you will do tuat, I'll agree to marry you for nothing."

"O, but we can't do that, sir, 'cause her mam and dad wants to see her tied, and they couldn't come no how; and besides, I don't want to be married for nothin'. I've been a-saving money all summer to pay for it."

"Well, then, my good fellow, postpone it a while."

"P-o-s-t-p-o-n-e it!" said the other, wildly, evidently at a loss to know what the word meant, but seeming to fancy it was some terrible alternative.

"Yes, put it off a while."

"Put it off! O, but that we can't do, for we have put it off once. Indeed, we must have ye to-night, and ye wont lose nothing by it."

And the poor fellow in his artless, bashful, and withal enthusiastic way, pleaded so long and earnestly, that the good-natured minister was finally induced to consent to attend to the pressing wants of his heart, and said he would certainly be at the log-house early in the evening.

The door had closed on the queer customer, and his heavy step was half way down the staircase, when suddenly it was heard returning quickly, and in a moment its owner's face peered again into the study, and from his lips issued the words:

"I forgot to tell you, Dominie, ye wont lose nothin' by it. I've got the change handy."

After an early tea, the minister, wrapping himself as warmly as possible in over garments, seated himself in a cutter, and giving the word to his horse was soon on the road to his promised fee. He found the travelling exceedingly bad all the way, while many actual perils beset him after he entered the narrow woodpath. But he was not one to back out of any duty when once agreed upon, and finally his novel wedding tour was completed, and he reined up his steed in front of the log dwelling, where dwelt the fair German bride. He looked in vain for a shed to shelter his weary Charlie, but was compelled, in default of one, to fasten him to a projecting limb of the rough stump fence. Having sheltered him from the cold blast, in a measure, by a buffalo robe and blanket, he made his way through heavy snow drifts to the door, and gave a muffled rap with his leather mittens. It was unanswered, and almost frozen, he pulled them off and struck his numb knuckles fiercely against the rough panel.

"Come in," said a stern voice, and he went in and hurried to the broad hearthstone, beyond which a huge fire crackled a merry welcome. In the corner, on one side, sat a gray-haired man, and opposite to him as old a woman, and both were smoking away as on a wager. The father removed his old stub of a pipe from his lips, long enough to say:

"Ye're the Dominie, be ye?" but his wife said nothing.

Finding he must "make himself at home," the minister, after thawing his chilled fingers, removed his hat, over-coat, and mocassins, and set about thoroughly warming himself, looking around him once in a while a little anxiously to see from whence the bride and groom would issue. At length, just as he was on the point of telling them he was ready, a clattering among the loose boards of the loft attracted his attention, and he concluded that the bridal pair had been awaiting the time in the cold garret. The steps advanced towards an opening in one corner of the room, against which leaned a rough ladder. Intently did Mr. K. fix his eyes upon it, his fun-loving bump aching with laughter at the ludicrous sight which he knew he would see. A single boot, which he knew at a glance belonged to his visitor of the morning, was the first object that protruded from the aperture; then came its mate, and then the unmistakable short pants, and finally the whole figure of the groom backed downwards cautiously, holding by the two hands his rustic bride, who, when she was within three or four steps of the floor, jumped down, as children say, and the reverberation resembled very nearly a slight shock of an earthquake.

Once fairly in the room, he dropped her hands and sped, as if he had been shot, to the opposite side, and sat down with a highly relieved air, while his partner dropped into a chair beside the ladder.

Quieting his merriment as best he could, Mr. K., after a few moments, arose in his usual dignified way, and said, solemnly:

"If you are ready for the ceremony, please rise."

The young couple stared at each other, at him, at the old people, but continued seated. Twice he repeated it, and twice the vacant stare repaid him.

"If you want to get married, stand up."

"That they understood, and they arose; but the groom stood still at the one side of the room, and the bride at the foot of the ladder.

"You are too far apart, my friends. Approach each other."

"Hitch up to her, Obadiah!" said the old man, and *his* words being intelligible, the parties finally drew into tolerably close proximity.

"You, Mr. Obadiah Van Duzen, and you, Miss Betsey Van Schermerhorn, have appeared before me for the purpose of ratifying the solemn covenant of your hearts. You will therefore please take and receive each other by the right hand."

Again came up that vacant stare, while Betsey's arms remained akimbo, and Obadiah's were plunged far into the depths of his pantaloons' pockets. The minister repeated the formula, but it was evidently Greek to them.

"Di, you fool, take hold of Bet's right hand!" said the old man, and 'Di obeying, the ceremony proceeded.

"Do you, Obadiah, take this woman, whose hand you have received and do now hold, to be your lawful and wedded wife?"

"Most sartinly, sir."

"Do you promise to love her above all others?"

"Why, sir, *I've done so this good while!*"

"Do you promise to be unto her a kind, faithful and affectionate husband, providing for her to the best of your ability, cherishing her in sickness and in health, in prosperity and adversity, and keeping yourself unto her alone, so long as you both do live?"

"Some of them big words I don't know the meaning on, but I'll promise and do all I can, sir."

"Do you, Miss Betsey Van Schermerhorn, take this man, whose hand you have received and do now hold, to be your lawful and wedded husband?"

"He's took me, haint he, sir, for to be his wife; he's my husband, then, without my takin' him."

"Do you promise to love him above all others?"

"I'll love him just as long as he loves me, and that's long enough!"

"Do you promise to be unto him a kind, faithful and affectionate wife?" and so on to the end of the sentence.

"Of course I do. If I didn't, I wouldn't 'ave said I'd had him."

"If to these things, then, you are mutually agreed, you will please separate your hands."

Again that vacant stare.

"Let go your hands," said the minister.

"What! after we're married? I don't see into it," replied the newly-made husband, "but I suppose it's all right."

"All right, sir. And now by the authority invested in me as a minister of the gospel, and in consonance with the laws of this State, in the presence of these witnesses, high Heaven and the holy angels, I pronounce you husband and wife, and what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Let us pray."

The benediction over, the minister gave his hand to the bride, saluting her as Mrs. Obadiah Van Duzen, and wishing her a thousand joys, and then congratulating the groom on having so early settled in life to his satisfaction, sat down, with a happy sense of relief that the ludicrousness of the whole scene had not so far disturbed his bump of laughter as to make it ring out its merry peals.

But the married pair stood still, just as he had left them, seeming to wonder if that was all. Mr. K. suffered them to remain so a while, enjoying their shame-faced and bashful joy. After a few moments, better feeling roused him, and he said to them

"You may sit down, Mr. and Mrs. Van Duzen; it's all over."

"It wasn't so bad, after all, was it Betsey?" said the groom.

"Why no," said she, artlessly, "it wouldn't be nothing if we was used to it!"

"Hand round the things, Betsey," said the mother, and the things were passed—a dish of doughnuts, another of gingerbread, and one of butternuts.

His early supper and chilling ride had given the minister a greedy appetite, and though at another time he might have shrunk from the masses of fried dough, and the slices of tough cake, he did justice to them now, and masticated them as furiously as does a hungry dog gnaw at a knuckle of salted ham. Butternuts he always loved, and so to eat them was no infliction.

"Hand round the 'tother," said the mother, authoritatively; and the bride passed round the "'tother," an ancient bowl, holding a dark-colored beverage, which tested the minister's discriminating palate severely, but which he finally concluded must be a species of black-strap, compounded of villanous whiskey, water, and maple sugar.

While discussing the nuts, Mr. K. gave the young couple much sage advice, the result of his theoretical views of matrimony, for he was himself a bachelor then, though in after years he could speak feelingly from experience. To all of it they listened intently, Obadiah, at the conclusion of each sentence, observing to his wife, "We'll do just so, for sartain; wont we, Betsey?"

"Of course; I allers meant to," being each time her reply.

The refreshments, "things" and "'tother," both despatched, Mr. K. rose and put on his outer-garments, and prepared to start for home. Deep down into the recesses of his pantaloons pocket delved the hand of the bridegroom, and as he withdrew it, a small brown-paper parcel was brought up. Thrusting it towards the minister, he said, gleefully:

"Didn't I tell ye, ye wouldn't lose anything. That's yer pay, sir."

"Thank you," said Mr. K., putting the fee carefully into the empty pocket of his vest. "And now that I've married you, you must come and hear me preach some Sunday."

"O, yes, we'll do that. We'll go to yer meeting if we ever goes to any. We'll never forget you, Dominie."

"Good-by, and success to you," said the clergyman; and giving the patient steed the reins, he sped rapidly homeward.

When thoroughly warmed again before his study fire, he drew from his pocket Obadiah's fee and counted out carefully the six pences and half dimes and whole dimes and pennies enclosed in the brown paper, and then calculated his profit and loss. He had paid ten and-sixpence, "York," for his cutter—he had received six-and-sixpence, "York," for his fee. But as the bridegroom told him, so the minister "owned up." He didn't lose nothin'"—the other three-and-sixpence he had in fun, and one of his sunniest memories was that RUSTIC WEDDING.


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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## THE SOLDIER'S DREAM.

BY MRS. SARAH E. DAWES.

The battle's loud din was hushed on the plain,
A soldier lay there mid heaps of the slain;
No loved one was near his worn spirit to cheer,
While groans of the dying fell sad on his ear.

All bravely he fought, yet wounded he lay,
To leave his last sigh from kindred away;
One moment of sleep came kindly at last,
And lifeless he roamed mid scenes of the past.

He trod the green sod of old England with glee,
And bled him with speed to his cot by the sea;
The form he so loved with joy he espied,
Once more to his heart he clasped his young bride.

I have come, dear Edith, no more will I go,
Where streamlets of blood all dreadfully flow;
I've fought with the brave where heroes have bled,
And seen all around me the forms of the dead.

I panted for glory, but false is its name,
Misery untold is the handmaid of fame;
No trumpet's loud blast, no battle array,
Shall tempt me again from my cottage away.

He woke from his slumber, no Edith was there,
The groans of the dying still rent the foul air;
One sigh for his home, one moan of deep pain,
And the soldier of Alma lay stretched with the slain.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

## LILLA BURKE'S LESSON.

BY EDWIN STANWOOD.

"I DON'T believe it, Walter. I do not believe t Lilla will listen to your proposal one mo nt, after she shall have become acquainted h your ideas of religion." James Newton ke thus; and he spoke with much firmness.

"Pooh!" uttered Walter Marshall, in reply. et me assure you that Lilla has too much se to do such an absurd thing."

Walter Marshall was a young man, not over r-and-twenty years of age, and one who was erally beloved by all his acquaintances. He s of a fine, noble form and feature, with light wn hair, which clustered in flowing ringlets out his high, full brow; his eyes were light e, but deep and bright in their quick light, l in the other features he was signally blessed, far as mere physical beauty goes. He had ducated from one of our best colleges, and had ne forth to commence life with a mind well ed with useful information. But in one ng was he lacking. He had allowed his mind ays to rest upon the darker sides and sorts religion, and he had now said in his heart, *There is no God!*" He was an avowed Atheist.

"I do not look upon the matter in that light," t Newton, in reply to Walter's last remark. do not think there would be anything absurd a warm, tender-hearted female's rejecting the t of one who could never hold one sympathy common with her upon the theme that rests rest her soul."

"And that theme," interrupted the youthful er, "is love for me."

"No, no," resumed the other, with a dubious ke of his head; "I think Lilla loves her God e."

"Pshaw!"

"Well, you must try it, then."

"I will."

"And look ye, Walter Marshall, you should orm the maiden upon this subject as soon as sible."

"I shall do so, most worthy censor, and you ll see how little you know of the heart of the ble girl who truly loves."

And with this the two friends separated.

Lilla Burke was one of those girls whose very k showed a heart all warm with love and gen us emotion. She had passed her nineteenth ar of life, and though much of sorrow had len to her lot, yet she was happy and peace- . She possessed one of those calm, happy nds, whose faith, being anchored on the ounst of Christian hope, never lets its possess- sink into abiding grief. She had lost both r parents, and now resided with her uncle; d though she had a fortune of some thousands dollars, yet no one, who possessed any sort of rue heart, could dwell very eagerly upon the tune when its lovely owner was present. She s one of those dark-haired, hazel-eyed, rosy- eeked maidens, whose face wears the very arm of love, and whose dimpling smile is a lisman that cannot be resisted.

Lilla Burke and Walter Marshall had been imate for many years, and for many years d they loved each other well and truly. And alter, too, was an orphan, with a fortune of rldly wealth somewhat greater in bulk than lla's.

One pleasant summer's evening, Lilla sat by r window and gazed out upon the street of the let village. The moon was up, and its soft, ver rays fell upon the scene with a glorious een, giving a light just tempered to the medi ive, aspiring soul. Thus Lilla sat when Wal r Marshall entered her presence. She was red to see him, and very soon they were in e full tide of joyous conversation. At length lla made some remark touching the wondrous wer of God in thus bespangling the heavens th twinkling orbs, and as the young man did t immediately answer, there was a short erence.

"Now," thought Walter to himself, "is the ne for me to unbosom myself," and with a ght hesitation in his manner, he commenced.

"Lilla," he said, "I suppose you and I may ffer some in our ideas of religion."

The maiden looked up into her lover's face th an expression of wonder, but made no re- y, and the youth continued:

"I have studied the matter carefully, in all its earings, and I have read the Bible with an rnest endeavor to understand it, and the more read it, the more am I convinced that it is but e work of human hands."

"Ay," returned Lilla, seeming not yet to have alized the full extent of her companion's mean- g. "We certainly find many marks of hu man thoughts and feelings there; but, at the same time, we find much that is surely of God. A part of the Bible professes to be but a history of the times."

"But," answered Walter, shaking his head, "I can take none of it as you probably take it. In short, I have no evidence of the existence of any such being as you call God."

Lilla started as though she had been struck with a knife.

"Walter," she at length said, speaking in a whisper, and at the same time laying her hand upon his arm, "surely I do not understand you. You certainly believe in a God—in a Supreme Being, who is the maker and preserver of us all."

The youth hesitated a moment, but he had commenced, and he was now resolved to speak the whole truth.

"No, Lilla," he said, "I do not believe in such a Being,—I cannot. I have no evidence of it; but, when I look around upon this earth and see all its sufferings and woes, all its weepings and wailings, all its wars and famines, all its sin and crime, and all its debasement and villany,—when I look upon half the world bowed down in ignorance and superstition, worshipping idols and senseless things, and when I see the other half all split up and divided upon religious points, with no two men thinking exactly alike —some of them making God a revengeful tyrant, and others representing him as a thing which may be turned in his purpose at the will of men, —when I see the Bible made to teach almost as many different theories as there are men who read it,—when I see all this, I say, I am constrained to step back and reject the whole. No, Lilla, I do not believe in your God!"

"And you are an Atheist!"

"What men call an Atheist."

Lilla Burke bowed her head, and a cold shudder crept through her frame. She did not weep, for the whole fountain of her soul seemed frozen up. Walter's sudden death could not have fallen so heavily upon her as did this.

"Look up, Lilla," spoke Walter, after some moments of silence. "What I have said has not moved you much, has it?"

"O," murmured the beautiful girl, throwing her arms about her lover's neck, "you do not mean all you have said."

"But I do, Lilla,—I mean it every word."

"And because so many men pervert the Bible, and turn its teachings to false issues, you will throw it away, and denounce it?"

"I can have no faith in it."

"And because so many of the human family disobey God's laws, and hence suffer their dreadful penalties, you will cast off your faith even in your Maker?"

"I have no evidence of the existence of such a Being, Lilla."

"Not in your own wondrous frame?"

"No."

"Alas! Walter, I had not thought this. Had you come to me maimed or blind, or even with your very body all distorted and disabled for life, I could have still been happy in proving to you how much I loved you. But now all is changed. And such a change! Where shall we find happiness more?"

"In our love, dearest."

"But that love which shall fail not must have a sure and safe foundation. But where shall be our other joys of life? Where our hopes and aspirations? Where our refuge in time of trouble, and our shelter in the hour when tribulation comes heavy upon us?"

"I still say, in our love, dearest. We will live for each other, and when troubles come we will meet them bravely. Of course we must, after all, find our joys in our own lives, for as we live and act, so shall we enjoy life. Our destiny is in our own hands, and we must work it out."

"And yet," murmured Lilla, gazing up into her companion's face, "I should almost fear to trust my love's keeping in the hands of one who recognized no power above himself.——Stop, Walter,—I do not mean that I should fear to trust his promise, but I should fear that in those hours when clouds might gather darkly about us, his soul would sink down, down, down, and drag me away with it."

"No, no, Lilla," cried Walter, speaking energetically. "Never could my love grow cold, nor my faith in that love be shaken. Only love me as you have done, and I call on God to witness that I—"

"—sh!" gently uttered the maiden, placing her hand upon his shoulder, "Walter, you cannot call upon *Him* to witness. Hereafter you have no witness to your heart's emotions but yourself. Nothing above your own poor self can offer you hope."

For a while the youth was confounded. He had spoken as his warm nature dictated, and he forgot the opinions he had just been expressing. Lilla arose and crossed the room, and looked out at an opposite window.

"Walter," she at length said, while a strange gleam shone in her eyes, and a zealous glow bloomed upon her face, "let us walk out. The air is calm and cool, and the moon is bright almost as day."

"Certainly," returned the young man, "you shall lead me where you will."

The maiden soon procured her light scarf and hat, and in a few moments they were ready to set forth. As soon as they reached the sidewalk, Lilla took Walter's arm, and signified her intention of walking down the street, and down they accordingly went. But little was said on the way, for each had much to think about.

At length the couple had reached the outskirts of the village, and ere long they turned off to the right, and moved on towards a point where lay a wide vale sheltered from the colder blasts, and from the rude gaze of man. A bridge which spanned a lowly sighing stream was crossed, and ere long afterwards they stood before a gate upon one side of which was a passage wide enough for footmen, it being a sort of stile, guarded by a post with a rotary cross-bar upon its top.

"You are not going in here," said Walter, instinctively drawing back.

"Yes, Walter, let us go in."

"But why—for what?"

"To please me."

Lilla passed over as she spoke, and soon the young man followed her, and again she took his arm.

The moonbeams fell brightly now, and upon all hands arose the spectral monuments that marked the sleeping places of the dead! The marble slabs looked dazzlingly white in the soft light of the glowing night queen, and the tapering shafts which marked the graves of the more favored children of worldly fortune, seemed like armless sentinels, watching over the city of death. And then all about were the more sombre stones—the black and the gray—and here and there a pile of masonry told that beneath was a house larger than its mates, where families could dwell in their winding-sheets.

Walter Marshall spoke not a word. The hour was passed when the hum of busy life awoke the air, and now all was still and quiet. Ever and anon he would pass a slab of dark-colored slate, upon the surface of which the lately carved characters could be plainly traced, and some of these spoke to him of friends who had passed away. Once or twice he trembled, and he would have turned back, had he not promised that he would follow his companion wherever she wished.

And yet Lilla led on. At length she turned from the hearse-path, and walked up among the graves where the grass grew tall and rank. When she stopped, it was upon a spot where four graves lay side by side, and all of unequal lengths. Upon the second one she sat down, and motioned her companion to do the same. He trembled, and hesitated. She looked up into his face, and a strange smile lit up her features. It was a smile, surely, and yet a sad and melancholy one. Walter resisted no longer, but, with another passing shudder, he sat down and bowed his head.

"Walter," spoke the lovely girl, in a tone as soft as the gentle zephyr that whispered through the tall cypress near them, "wonder not that I have brought thee hither. Here is the bound of life. Here the clay puts away its all of life, and rests in the bosom of earth. Upon this spot we may feel that we stand upon the verge of eternity! O, how dark and gloomy,—how painful and hopeless must be the soul of him who sees nothing beyond these cold, cheerless graves! Should we not pity and pray for such an one?"

Still the young man bowed his head, and did not speak.

"Walter," resumed the maiden, laying her hand upon his arm, and speaking with a feeling so intense that its emotion was imparted to her companion ere he knew its import, "who sleeps beneath this spot? Whose form was that which last you saw beneath the very mound upon which you now sit?"

"*My mother's!*" uttered the youth, trembling, and bowing his head lower down, while his hands now covered his face.

"Answer me again, Walter," pursued the lovely girl, nestling closer to him, and pouring forth the whole strength of her soul into her words. "Where now is that noble, devoted spirit that led you up from helpless infancy to opening manhood? Where now is that pure soul which yearned towards you ever, and upon the love of which you leaned with all the hopes and joys of sunny boyhood? Where now is that brilliant mind which taught you the first lessons of life—which first opened the book of wisdom to your understanding, and which once led you into the way of prayer? Where is it now, Walter?"

The youth spoke not, but he sobbed aloud, and big tears trickled through his fingers, and dropped upon the green grass that grew above his mother's grave.

"Walter," spoke the angel who had led him thither, "look before you, upon this gentle mound which declines to our feet. Whose mortal body reposes there?"

"*My father's!*"

"And there are two graves behind us. One of these I have wept over many a time, for the dearest friend of my girlhood, outside of my own home, was laid there to sleep. O, how well do I remember that time. You and I both wept then,—when your own loved sister, our darling Kate, was placed within the narrow house. Do you remember?"

But still the youth was silent, save in sobs and weeping, for the pangs of the past were upon him, and his noble soul was moved.

"And now, my own loved one, the time is not far distant when you and I shall be brought hither to rest with the dead! Wherefore is this strange longing which I feel, when my thoughts dwell upon the end of my life's journey? But you, Walter, can feel it not. Like the dumb beast which feeds the shambles to-day, or like the dog who dies in the street, you hope for nothing beyond this cold, dark, cheerless place. You see in all this strange and marvellous machinery which we call man, only a thing raised up to fatness to feed worms with!"

"O, stop, Lilla,—stop!" groaned the youth, raising his head and gazing into the maiden's face. "Man must be something more than this!"

"Walter," whispered the angel, drawing his head upon her shoulder, "do you not think that even now that fond mother may be looking down upon her first-born and best-beloved?"

The youth started up—gazed a moment into the moonlit face of his sweet companion—and then bowed his head again until it rested upon her bosom.

"Lilla," he said, "do you think she can look down upon me now?"

The question was asked with such a bursting forth of hope that the maiden was for the moment wonder-struck; but quickly there came a glow of joyous hope to her own face, and in a zealous tone she answered:

"Yes, Walter, I feel as sure of it as though I saw her now." She would have spoken more, but at that instant Walter Marshall started up, and reached forth both his hands into open space.

"*Mother! Mother!*" he gasped, "I am with thee! O, my mother!"

For some moments he remained thus—then his arms settled down by his side, and he sank back upon the grave. In a few moments more he turned to his companion, and said:

"Lilla—did you see how sweetly she smiled?"

"Ah! Walter," the maiden replied, "that was a vision reserved for you alone!"

"But did you not see it? Did you not see my mother?"

"Not then,—for I was not looking where you were."

"And where think you I was looking?"

Lilla had it upon her tongue to say, "*Inward, upon your own soul;*" but she did not speak so. After a moment's hesitation, she replied:

"You were looking *where the finger of your hope pointed.*"

"So I was," said he, as soon as he could comprehend the idea. "And now come," he added, in an altered tone, "the air grows chill, and the dew is falling damp and fast. You must not remain here longer."

Lilla hesitated a moment ere she arose, and then she placed both her arms about her lover's neck, and, in a tremulous, anxious tone, she asked:

"Walter, are you sorry you came?"

"No, no, Lilla. But let that pass now. I would think deeply ere I answer to all I know you would ask. Come, it will not be safe for you to remain here longer."

And Lilla arose, and once more took her lover's arm. Not a word more was spoken until they had left the grave-yard, and then only general topics were discussed. But the conversation was not free, for both had thoughts and feelings of far more weight than those to which they gave utterance.

"Well, Walter, did you see Lilla Burke last evening?" asked James Newton, as the two friends met on the following day.

"I did."

"And did you confess to her what your ideas of religion were?"

"I did."

"And is she yet yours to hope for in wedlock?"

"I think so."

"Then I have mistaken her—that's all."

"Stop one moment, James. You have spoken very confidently upon this subject, and now I would like to have you tell me upon what you found your opinion."

"Certainly," replied Newton, turning back. "I have made the assertion because I thought I knew Lilla Burke's soul. She has been my next-door neighbor from earliest childhood; we have been school-mates together, and we have been church-mates together. I know that that noble girl's whole soul is based upon the rock of her hope in God and faith in immortality. I know that her sweetest joys are drawn from this source, and that all the good of life is tempered by it. I have heard her give consolation to a dying friend, and pray by the bedside of her inveterate companion. I know that she is happy only so far as she realizes the faithful discharge of what she considers her holy duty. And hence you will not wonder that I should fear she would shrink from one who could hold no atom of sympathy with her in this, her soul's purest work. Forgive me, Walter, but I cannot yet believe that she can bind herself for life to one in whose soul she cannot find a single spark that throws a beam of light beyond the grave. I may be mistaken. But you do not blame me, Walter."

"No, no, James."

"How's this? What's the matter? Ah! she has already left you."

"No, no."

"Then why these tears?"

"They are tears of repentance, James," cried the youth, as he grasped the hand of his friend, "the tears of a soul made joyous in being freed from the blackest doubts that ever dwelt upon humanity. Ask me no more now."

"But Lilla—does she know of this?"

"Not wholly—not yet—but she will."

That night, while Lilla Burke sat again by her window, her lover came. He took her hands in his, and then he breathed into her ear the truth that had grown up within him. He felt her warm cheek against his own, and he knew that her tears were falling upon his shoulder. He blessed her with his whole soul, and from that moment he was a happier man. The great picture of humanity no longer looked dark to him, but in all he saw of misery and of shame, of wretchedness and of degradation, he could see that it all came from the infringement of God's wholesome laws by short-sighted man. In all he could see the working of a great system, the END of which was to be purification and peace!

Lilla Burke is now long listened to Walter's proposal for her hand, and never spoke she a happier word than when she answered him "Yes," to that question. He had a saviour and wife in one pure being, and well did he know how to appreciate the blessing.

### A SUCCESSFUL STRATAGEM.

When Haydn, the musician, was in England, one of the royal princes commissioned Sir Joshua Reynolds to take his portrait. Haydn went to the painter's house and sat to him, but soon grew tired. Sir Joshua, careful of his reputation, would not paint a man of acknowledged genius with a stupid countenance, and deferred the sitting till another day. The same weariness and want of expression occurring at the next attempt, Reynolds went and communicated the circumstance to his royal highness, who contrived the following stratagem. He sent to the painter's house a pretty German girl, in the service of the Queen. Haydn took his seat for the third time, and as soon as the conversation began to flag, a curtain rose, and the fair German addressed him in his native language, with a most elegant compliment. Haydn, delighted, overwhelmed the enchantress with questions; his countenance recovered its animation, and Sir Joshua rapidly seized its traits.—*Anecdotes of Artists.*

The secret of some men's attractions might be safely told to all the world; for under any other management but that of the possessor, they would cease to attract. Those attempting to imitate them would find they had got the fiddle, but not the fiddle-stick.

## Jester's Picnic.

When Mr. Adam's dog Carlo was poisoned, Ike attempted an elegy upon him, and began thus:

"Poor Carlo, he is dead and gone,
And he went come back any more;
I wish that fellow that planted him
Could be served the same sauce."

The divine "flatness" here gave out, but as he read the lines to Mrs. Partington, her face lighted up with pride, like the bright bottom of her tin pail in the ruddy rays of the coal fire.

"There," said she, as she felt in her pocket for a cent, "that's what I call genus, and seems to warrant the predicament that you will some day be a learned man if you only know enough, and write minus poems, as all the great writers do. I would be more proud to have it so than to have you the dolphin of France, or the prince of whales."

She chased the cent into a corner, and Ike held out his hand to receive a large horn button that she had mistaken for a cent. Four marbles, and any quantity of subsequent winnings, faded from that young gentleman's mind as the valueless horn touched his waiting palm.

A Yankee gentleman, conveying a British gentleman around to view the different objects of attraction in the city of Boston, brought him to Bunker Hill. They stood looking at the splendid shaft, when the Yankee said, "This is the spot where Warren fell."

"Ah," replied the Englishman, evidently not posted up in local historical matters, "did it hurt him much?"

The native looked at him with an expression of fourteen 4th of Julys in his countenance.

"Hurt him!" exclaimed he, "he was killed, sir."

"Ah, he was, eh?" said the stranger, still eyeing the monument, layer by layer. "Well, I should think he would have been, to fall so far."

A gent'eman of our acquaintance, says the Boston Telegraph, passing up Washington Street the other evening, just behind two little boys, not more than eight years old, overheard them discussing the merits of different actors, and the beauties of the various theatres of Boston.

"Bob," said one, "have you ever seen Hamlet played?"

"Thunder!" cried the other, in astonishment, "where do you think I've been all my lifetime? Of course I have."

"Ah!" cried the other, with a sigh of regret, "as long as I've lived in Boston, I've never seen it *done*."

"Poverty runs strongly to fun," says an acute observer. An Irishman is never so full of the article as when he is reduced to one shirt and two potatoes. Wealth is taciturn and fretful. Stock-brokers would no sooner indulge in a hearty laugh than they would lend money on a "second mortgage." Nature is a great believer in compensations. To those she sends wealth, she saddles with law-suits and dyspepsia. The poor never indulge in woodcock, but then they have a style of appetite that converts a No. 3 mackerel into a salmon.

The newspapers say that "the path of rectitude" is now so little trodden that it is overgrown with grass, owing, no doubt, to the hardness of the times. When money commands two per cent. a month, carriages are scarce, and elegantly cushioned pews in fashionable churches remain empty. People can't afford to lay up their treasures just now where "moth and dust don't corrupt."

One of the deacons in Edward Dey's church asked him if he usually kissed the bride at weddings.

"Always," was the reply.

"And how do you manage when the happy pair are negroes?" was the deacon's next question.

"In all such cases," replied Mr. Dey, "the duty of kissing is appointed to the deacons."

Lady.—Mr. ——— is really a most wretched preacher.

Husband.—My dear, he is one of the most sound orthodox preachers I know.

Lady.—He may be very orthodox, but he is very heavy.

Husband.—Gold is heavy.

Lady.—Yes, but gold is bright.

A correspondent, says the N. Y. Post, wishes to know, "What line in Shakspeare is entirely ontomological? He cannot say, unless somebody has been found sufficiently barbarous to read a certain passage of Macbeth in this wise:

"Fly, Flea ance (ants), fly, fly, fly!"

The spirit of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, delivered a lecture to some spiritualists in Syracuse, recently, which was so eloquent that the meeting, by vote, ordered the ghost [A Syracuse journal says, "It is a great Pitt y the speech of the defunct minister was not reported."

A Tyneside doctor was lecturing a poor tippler for shortening his days with drink. With the most charming *naivete* he replied, "Why, I come from M., where two doctors drank themselves to death; and sure they'd never took in if it had been bad for them."


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VOL. X.

PAU

THE SCOUR

A STOR

CHAPTER V

A FEARFUL CONFI

As the sun arose the men we
the quarter deck waiting for t
the young surgeon, for they
hear of the gunner. Ere lon
and he informed the men that
to be out of danger, but that i
time before he could return to
the same time he requested
little noise as possible about th

The day passed away, and t
easier, though Paul felt sure, if
pened, that the result would
might more leeches were applie
was given, but the invalid cou
the following morning the ca
was in sight upon the starbo
take advantage of a current
pretty close into the shore.

The wind was now to the s
blowing quite fresh—that is,
breeze, though this had only
The gunner had not slept a m
night, though the pain in his
diminishing. He now for th
his accident asked for someth
Paul allowed him to have som
daring to give anything more
fever.

Near midway of the south
island of Margarita there is a
promontory, making out into
of some ten miles. At nine o
cape was upon the lee bow, a
four miles distant, and at th
came to a lull, and then chop
northward, coming off the sh
course now lay she would pas
longs of the cape, but Laroon
well, and he was not afraid
half-past nine the wind was s
and the brig now had her starb
and in fifteen minutes more th
cape was directly under the w
not more than two cables' leng

"*Sail ho!*" at this momen
fore top in tones that made eve

"*A ship! a ship!*" shouted t

And now they could all see
royals of a ship looming up ov

"Up with the helm!" s
captain; "Jump to the brace
ward—round in on the weath

In a few moments the brig'
southwest, and by the time th
layed she had cleared the ca
under the western bluff, and
mile distant, was a French c
sail with her yards nearly squ

"To the guns, every man!
much excited—" every man w
and the rest of you get up the
every pistol and carbine, and
his cutlass! Load—quick!"

The brig's crew sprang to
will, each man knowing just
of the port guns were run aft
after ports, and just as the bre
gun was lashed there came
Frenchman's bows. The ball
starboard gunpkin, and did n

"Now give 'em a shot in r
roon.

Accordingly one of the ste
but without effect. Next o
from the corvette, which str
some twenty yards from the
beam.

During this exciting perio
ton had been in a state of in
At the first mention of the F
he had leaped from his bunk
the utmost difficulty that Pa
back again.

"By the holy saints, I m
the old man cried.

"Well—let's see you g
surgeon.